

INTERVIEW WITH A VAMPIRE

by

Anne Rice

INT. ROOM - NIGHT (SAN FRANCISCO)

A small bare room, illuminated only by the streetlight coming through the window.

A hand presses a cassette into a recorder and fiddles with a small microphone.

Malloy sits over a table fiddling with the tape. He is young, half-shaven, dressed in T shirt and jeans. He looks too --

LOUIS, who stands by the window, looking out on the street, with his back to Malloy. Louis is dressed in an old-fashioned suit.

LOUIS

So you want me to tell you the story  
of my life...

MALLOY

That's what I do. I interview people.  
I collect lives. F.M. radio. F.F.R.C.  
I just interviewed a genuine hero, a  
cop who -

LOUIS

(quietly interrupting)  
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 a pocket  
full of tapes.

LOUIS

You followed me here, didn't you?

MALLOY

Saw you in the street outside. You  
seemed interesting. Is this where  
you live?

LOUIS

It's just a room...

MALLOY

So shall we begin?  
(Playfully, almost  
teasing)  
What do you do?

LOUIS

I'm a vampire.

Malloy laughs.

MALLOY

See? I knew you were interesting.  
You mean this literally, I take it?

LOUIS

Absolutely. I was watching you  
watching me. I was waiting for you  
in that alleyway. And then you began  
to speak.

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'll tell you my story. All of it.  
I'd like to do that very much.

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. Things change.

Louis stands opposite, hand on the chair. Malloy is riveted.

MALLOY

You believe this, don't you? That  
you're a vampire? You really think...

LOUIS

We can't begin this way. Let me turn  
on the light.

MALLOY

But I thought vampires didn't like  
the light.

LOUIS

We love it. I only wanted to prepare  
you.

Louis pulls the chord of the overhead naked light bulb.

LOUIS' 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 lit by the street-light from the window.  
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, you see. But not human. I  
haven't been human for two hundred  
years.

Malloy is speechless, frightened yet enthralled.

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 I call it. That's really where we  
should start, don't you think?

MALLOY  
You're not lying to me, are you?

LOUIS  
Why should I lie? 1791 was the year  
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

LOUIS  
large plantation just south of New  
Orleans...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LOUISIANA - DAY (1791)

A dishevelled Louis, hair in pigtail, in deep pocket frock coat, rides his horse through the fields of indigo, passing an overseer and slaves at work.

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

He comes to a small parish church and a graveyard. he dismounts and walks through the tombs to an elaborate one in Greek Style.

LOUIS (V.O.)  
I had just lost my wife in childbirth.  
She and the infant had been buried  
less than half a year.

There is a marble angel above the tomb, feminine, with a tiny cherub angel in her arms. Louis looks from the angel, down to the inscriptions on the tomb:

DIANNE DE POINTE DU LAC 1763 - 1791 INFANT JEAN MARIE - 1791

Louis rips away the vines already covering the inscription, then drinks from a pocket-flask. His face is ashen.

LOUIS (V.O.)  
I was twenty-four and life seemed  
finished. I couldn't bear the pain  
of thier loss. I longed for a release  
from it.

INT. WATERFRONT TAVERN. NIGHT.

Louis in ragged lace and dirty brocade sitting between two whores at a gaming table, drinking absinthe. All around him flatboatmen, whores, gamblers, black african freedmen.

LOUIS (V.O.)  
I wanted to lose everything. My  
wealth, my estate, my sanity. But  
Lady Luck didn't oblige.

Louis dsiplays a hand of four aces. A gambler at the table stands in fury, over turning money, cards, drinks.

LOUIS  
You're calling me a cheat?

GAMBLER

I'm calling you a piece of shit -

The gambler pulls out a pearl-handled pistol and points it at Louis. The crowd hushes and draws back. Louis smiles drunkenly and stands. he rips open his lace shirt, exposing his chest.

LOUIS

Then do me a favour. Get rid of this piece of shit...

The gambler's finger on the trigger. His hand shakes.

LOUIS

You lack the courage of your convictions, sir. Do it.

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

LOUIS (V.O.)

Most of all I longed for death. I know that now. I invited it, a release from the pain of living...

The gambler lowers his gun, scowling. Louis pockets the fistfulls of coins he has won.

EXT. WATERFRONT. NIGHT.

Loud, crowded riverfront taverns full of ruffians. Louis staggers down, an arm around a whore, drinking from a bottle. A pockmarked pimp follows behind.

LOUIS

My invitation was open to anyone. Sailors, thieves, whores and slaves...

EXT. WHARF - NIGHT

Louis, quite insensible, being propped up against a wall by the whore in a dank wharf over the water. The pimp rifles his pockets, then pulss a knife, about to slice his throat, when a shadow falls over him. He turns, and we see the face of Lestat, who lifts him into the air by his throat, breaking his neck. the whore screams and Lestat's other hand clamps over her mouth. Lestat drags her towards him. Louis falls to the ground, supported no more, insensible. Close on his face, as we hear the last breaths of life of the whore, off.

LOUIS (V.O.)

But it was a vampire that accepted.

IN THE WATER -

The bodies of the thief and whore float by. Above on the wharf, Louis, now awake, stares down at them. He turns, to see Lestat, towering above him.

LESTAT

They would have killed you -

LOUIS

Then my luck would have changed.

LESTAT

You want death? Is it death you want?

LOUIS

Yes...

Lestat floats down on top of him, then lifts him in the air, draws his head back by the hair and sinks his teeth in his neck.

ON LOUIS' FACE - every muscle rigid, teeth clenched, as the blood is drained from him.

ON THEIR FEET - hovering above the ground, like two quivering dancers.

THE WIND - billows through the ghostly white sails and rigging of the boats around the wharf.

LESTAT - floats higher, with Louis in his arms, draining his blood. One hand reaches out and grips a rope, hanging from a shipmast. The other holds Louis. He withdraws his teeth, and looks into Louis' drained face.

LESTAT

You still want death? Or have you  
tasted it enough?

Louis can barely get the words out.

LOUIS

Enough...

Lestat smiles and lets him go. Louis falls and plummets into the water below.

LOUIS' FACE - coming to the surface, in the water lapping by the wharf. The bodies of the whore and thief float beside him. He looks up and sees Lestat way above him, dangling from the rope of the shipmast.

INT. ROOM. SAN FRANCISCO.

ON MALLOY'S FACE

captivated, terrified, enthralled.

MALLOY

That's how it happened?

LOUIS

No. The Gift of Darkness requires  
more than that, as you'll see.

EXT. WATERFRONT - DAY

Louis floating by mudflats, surrounded by dead fish, the  
carcasses of animals, eighteenth century rubbish. He gets to  
his feet and walks weakly through the mudflats. The sun is  
coming up over the sea behind him.

LOUIS (V.O.)

He left me half dead that morning.  
he wanted something from me. He came  
back the following night.

INT. LAVISH FRENCH - FURNISHED BEDROOM AT POINT DU LAC

Louis is delirious in a four-poster bed, shrouded with  
mosquito netting. A female slave, YVETTE, bathes his face  
with a rag. She is crying. Other slave women hover in the  
shadows. Yvette puts out all candles save one by the bed,  
and withdraws, with the others.

Candlelight flickers on the face of the bisque virgin.

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

LESTAT, exquisitely dressed in French clothing, stands by  
the bed smiling. In the light of the candle we see that he  
is not human; skin too white; eyes too bright. Lestat looks  
amiable, even mischevius, but impossible - and angel or  
monster.

Louis grabs his pistol from the table and cocks it.

LOUIS

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

LESTAT

And a beautiful house it is too.  
Yours is a good life, isn't it?



Louis takes aim. Lestat puts his hand over the barrel. Louis fires. The bullet tears a hole in Lestat's hand. Lestat is unfazed. He takes the gun from Louis' hand and throws it away. His hand begins to heal.

LESTAT  
You're not afraid of anything, are you?

LOUIS  
Why should I be?

Louis reaches for his sword, hanging by the bed, and points it. Lestat laughs indulgently. He draws closer.

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

He comes closer to Louis, right up to his face, so the sword passes through his waistcoat.

LESTAT  
Were all last night's promises for nothing?

He reaches out with his now-healed hand and plucks out the sword.

LOUIS  
What do you want from me?

LESTAT  
I've come to answer your prayers.  
You want to die, don't you? Life has no meaning anymore, does it?

Lestat sits down on the bed, drawing up one knee. Louis is becoming spellbound.

LESTAT  
The wine has no taste. The food sickens you. There seems no reason for any of it, does there? But what if I could give it back to you? Pluck out the pain and give you another life? And it would be for all time? And sickness and death could never touch you again?

The vampire theme rises, with the sound of a heartbeat.  
Dissolve to:

EXT. GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

The camera drifts through the graveyard where Louis' wife is buring. Everything is lit with an eery glow, as if seen through some unearthly eye.

LESTAT

Vampires, that's what we are.  
Creatures of darkness, only we see  
it that darkness more clearly than  
any mortal has ever seen...

Louis and Lestat drifting, dreamlike, through the overhanging vines, comes to the grave of his wife and child. Above the crypt, the statue of angel, mother and child.

LESTAT

Wouldn't it be sweet to bid pain  
goodbye? To wave away anguish and  
grief? To embrace the peace of the  
unending night?

The marble fingers of the child on the statue move. The angel raises her head and has the face of Louis wife, Diane. she raises her hand and touches Louis tear-streamed face. The child speaks.

MARBLE CHILD

Papa...

Louis reaches out to embrace them and finds himself touching cold marble. He cries out in anguish-

LOUIS

Diane!!!!

LESTAT

They are gone, Louis. Death took  
them. Death which you can now  
destroy...

LOUIS

NO!!!!!!

INT. LOUIS BEDROOM - NIGHT

Louis, thrashing on the bed in a delerium. Lestat places a hand on his forehead and soothes him.

LESTAT

You have to ask me for this. You  
have to want it, do you hear me?

LOUIS

Give it to me!!!

LESTAT  
Vampires. We thrive on blood.

LOUIS  
I want it!

Lestat bends close as if to drink Louis' blood. Louis does not shrink back, but stares into his eyes. Lestat draws back, then stands up and goes to the French doors.

LESTAT  
Tomorrow night. You must prove  
yourself. I will give you the choice  
I never had.

He looks outside.

LESTAT  
The sun's coming up. Watch it  
carefully. If you come with me  
tomorrow, you'll never see it again.

He leaves. Louis sits dazed, staring at the empty French window. The sun rises with unnatural beauty, over the swamplands and the plantation, filling the room, striking water-pitcher, glass, mirror, and the picture of his dead wife.

LOUIS (V.O.)  
My last sunrise. That morning I was  
not yet a vampire, and I saw my last  
sunrise. I remember it completely,  
yet I don't remember any sunrise  
before it. I watched the whole  
magnificence of the dawn for the  
last time, as if it were the first.  
And then I said goodbye to sunlight  
and went out to become what I became.

EXT. PLANTATION - NIGHT

Lestat and Louis walk through the slave quarters, huddles groups around fires, music, singing. The sound of whipping is heard.

LESTAT  
Your grief has unhinged you. You've  
let your estate rot.

In the woods beyond the quarters, the white overseer is whipping a black slave, with horrifying savagery.

LESTAT

You let your overseer run riot, work your slaves to the bone. We'll start with him.

LOUIS

How do you mean, start?

LESTAT

Call him.

Louis calls.

LOUIS

Carlos!!!

The overseer turns and comes towards them, with the bloodied whip.

LESTAT

Why the bloody whip, Carlos?

The overseer looks into his eyes, shivers with terror, drops the whip and runs for the trees. Lestat is on him in an instant. He sinks his teeth in his neck. Louis runs to him, tries to pull him off. But Lestat turns to Louis and smiles, with his bloodied mouth.

LESTAT

Let's call that a start.

LOUIS

I can't do it.

LESTAT

You've just done it -

LOUIS

Kill me if you will, but I can't do this...

He flees, as Lestat ends to finish off the overseer.

EXT. POINTE DU LAC - NIGHT

Louis running up the steps leading to the gallery. He is crazed with guilt. He looks up and sees -

LESTAT --

Sitting collected at the head of the steps.

LOUIS

Backs away as Lestat rises and descends the steps so fluidly he hardly seems to move.

LESTAT

Don't worry. He was white trash, they come at two a penny. I dumped him in the swamp and untied the slave, licked his wounds clean.

LOUIS

You're 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 it, I tell you.

LESTAT

Your perfect. Your 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.

Louis takes out his flask and drinks. Drunkely, he turns and heads for a nearby swamp.

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

Louis stops again in front of the crypt. Drinks from the flask, leans his forehead against the stone.

Lestat appears beside him, radiant, beautiful.

LESTAT

You really want to be with them?

LOUIS

Yes. Kill me. Kill me like you promised -

LESTAT

You asked for death. I didn't promise it -

In a quiet rage, Lestat raise his fist and shatters the marble face stone, revealing a coffin below. His fist shatters that in turn, revealing the half-rotted body of a women, holding an infant, no longer recognisable as individuals, a tangle of gruesome rotted hair, flesh, eaten away lace, insects and worms crawling over it.

Louis gasps.

LESTAT

It's not your wife and child my friend. 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, then hyperclear. Louis again is spellbound. He drops the flask, which shatters on the stones.

Lestat appears angelic in his radiance.

LESTAT

We shall be this way always, my friend. Young as we are now. I'm lonely for a companion, lonely for your strength. But I'm not that lonely. Do you want to come or not?

Louis capitulates in one long sigh.

LOUIS

Yes...

Lestat comes closer, smiling.

LESTAT

Did I hear a yes?

LOUIS

Yes...

Lestat embraces Louis, obscuring his face. He drinks his blood. We hear two heartbeats, out of sync, coming together. We see Louis' face, growing paler, paler, as his blood is drained. His eyes stare upwards, losing thier focus.

LOUIS POV --

The moon, through hanging vines. The marble statue of his wife and child smile at him, as if come alive. Her hair blows in the breeze, wonderful gold tresses, the child's fingers reach out...

BACK TO SCENE

Lestat lets Louis fall down beside the broken crypt. Louis looks from the rotting bodies to Lestat above him. radiant. Lestat speaks gently.

LESTAT  
I've drained you to the point of death. If you drink from me you live for ever. If I leave you here you die.

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

LOUIS  
No. Don't leave me here. Give it to me.

Lestat lifts his own right wrist to his teeth. Fangs slash his own flesh, blood falls.

LESTAT  
You're sure?

LOUIS  
Sure...

Louis rises to accept the first drops with his open mouth. Lestat gathers him up, as Louis clamps his hand on Lestat's arm and drinks from the wrist.

The VAMPIRE THEME swells.

Lestat watches him drink his wrist with wry amusement. Louis finishes, staggers away from him as if drunk.

LOUIS' POV -

Vampire vision. The world is transformed, the swamp, the moon, the clouds, the cry of the night birds all come to him with unnatural clarity. He looks down with pity at the corpses of his wife and child who appear beautiful in death now rather than repulsive. He closes the lid of the coffin and replaces it in the ground, astonished at the ease of it.

He turns and stares at Lestat whom he sees now with 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 colour.

LESTAT  
Stop staring at my buttons. Didn't I tell you it was going to be fun?

Lestat leads him into the swamp. Everything astonished Louis, as if he's never seen it before. Louis is suddenly racked by shudders of pain.

LESTAT  
You're body's dying. Pay no attention.  
It will take twenty minutes at most.

LOUIS  
Dying?

Louis dry-retchers.

LESTAT  
It happens to us all.

Lestat wipes Louis' brow.

LESTAT  
Come, you're going to feed now.

LOUIS  
I want a woman.

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

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

LOUIS' VAMPIRE POV - SWAMP

Small high ground. Camp of runaway slaves. Several share a bottle of rum around the fire. A male slave rises. A gorgeous hunk of flesh in the moonlight and goes into the swamp to relieve his bladder.

LESTAT  
They're all beautiful now. Men, women,  
the old, the young...simply because  
they are alive. -

The slave walks towards them in the darkness. A crucifix gleams round his neck.

LESTAT  
Take him.

LOUIS  
The crucifix -

LESTAT  
Forget the crucifix. Take him.



Louis hesitates.

LESTAT  
Resist no more Louis. Feed...

The slave looks up and sees them. Two gleaming white beings standing before him with devil's eyes. The he runs.

Louis can resist him no more. He swoops on him with a vampire's rapid movement, brings him to the ground and sinks his teeth in his neck.

Close on Louis feeding on the slave, the magnificent body shuddering in its death-throes. Lestat stands above, laughing.

The slave dies. Louis rises from him, drunkenly, engorged with blood.

LOUIS  
What have I done?

LESTAT  
You have fed. You were made for this...

Louis looks down at the body of the slave. Lestat's laughter echoes around him.

LOUIS  
Dear God, what have I done?

LESTAT  
You've killed Louis. And enjoyed it.

Lestat laughs harder. Louis runs from him, screaming in anguish.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

Louis reaches his wife's grave. He falls to his knees, throws back his head and bares his new fangs to the moon.

LOUIS  
Dear God, what have I become????

INT. ROOM - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

Malloy stares at Louis, terrified and enthralled.

MALLOY  
You said the slave had a crucifix...

LOUIS  
Oh, that rumour about crosses?

MALLOY

You can't look at them...

LOUIS

Nonsense, my friend. I can look on anything I like. And I am particularly fond of looking on crucifixes.

MALLOY

The story about stakes through the heart?

LOUIS

The same. As you would say today... Bull shit.

MALLOY

What about coffins?

LOUIS

Coffins... coffins unfortunately are a necessity...

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

Louis walks up the steps to the mansion. He looks now like a fully-fledged vampire. Yvette, the slave girl stares at him from the open doorway. Cascades of harpsichord music come from the interior.

LOUIS (V.O.)

Killing is no ordinary act. It is the experience of another's life for certain. That night I had lost my own life and taken another's. I was drowning in a sea of human guilt and regret, with all the heightened senses of a vampire...

Louis enters the mansion, following the harpsichord music, as if in a dream. Yvette draws back as he approaches.

INT. MANSION - NIGHT

Louis wanders into the parlour, where Lestat is playing the harpsichord rapidly and exuberantly. Louis goes to a full-length mirror and sees his own reflection there - quite the perfect vampire.

LESTAT

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

LOUIS

It can't be...

LESTAT

Give it time. You're like a man who loses a limb and still imagines he feels pain. It will pass. And we must sleep now. I can feel the sun approaching.

EXT. POINTE DU LAC

Dawn spreading over the plantation.

INT. BASEMENT - POINTE DU LAC

A brick walled storage room. Two coffins stand on the floor. Lestat enters with a lantern, Louis behind. Lestat is apprehensive and protective of Louis. He pulls back one lid to reveal a satin interior.

LESTAT

You must get into it. It's the only safe place for you when the light comes.

LOUIS

And if I don't?

LESTAT

The sun will destroy the blood I've given you. Every tissue, every vein. The fire in this lantern could do that too.

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

LESTAT

Don't be afraid. In moments you'll be sleeping as soundly as you ever slept. And when you awake I'll be waiting for you, and so will all the world.

Louis crawls into the coffin, fearful yet fascinated.

LOUIS

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

Lestat smiles bitterly and nods.

LESTAT

Someday I'll tell you. We have a lot of time to talk to each other. You might say... we have all the time we shall ever need.

He closes the lid.

Total darkness. Sounds of Louis' panicked breathing. Of his prayer again.

LOUIS

Dear God, what have I done?

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Louis and Lestat sitting at a sumptuous table, piled with uneaten food. Lestat is going through sheafs of documents.

LOUIS (V.O.)

I awoke the next evening to a different world. And I realized there are as profound differences between vampires as between human beings...

Lestat, totting up figures on a piece of paper.

LESTAT

Your wealth, dear Louis, is inestimable. Your income from cotton alone will keep us in comfort for a century.

Louis just stares at him.

LOUIS (V.O.)

I sat there staring at him with contempt. He had the soul of a shopkeeper, he was the sow's ear out of which nothing fine could be made. I felt sadly cheated in having him as a teacher...

Lestat looks up at him and grins.

LESTAT

You'll get used to killing. Just forget about that mortal coil. You'll become accustomed to things all too quickly.

LOUIS

Do you think so?

Yvette enters, stands behind him, staring at Lestat with loathing.

YVETTE  
You are not hungry, sir...

LESTAT  
Au contraire, my dear. He could eat a horse...

Lestat laughs loudly. Louis turns and looks at Yvette. Her beautiful forehead in the candlelight, the veins pulsing on her neck and her hands.

LOUIS (V.O.)  
I looked at anything mortal and saw all life as precious, condemning all fruitless guilt and passion that would let it slip through the fingers like sand...

Yvette returns his stare, troubled.

LOUIS (V.O.)  
It was only as a vampire that I could see Yvette's beauty. Her fear of me increased my desire.

Yvette reaches for his uneaten plate. Louis stops her hand. Holds it for a beat too long, looking at the veins in her wrist.

LOUIS  
I will finish it, Yvette. Now leave us.

She turns and runs from the table. Lestat leans towards him.

LESTAT  
Can't you pretend, you fool? Don't give the game away. We're lucky to have such a home.

His hand snakes out under the table. It comes up holding a large grey rat.

LESTAT  
Pretend to drink, at least.

He bares his fangs and slices the rat's throat. He pours the blood into a crystal glass.

LESTAT  
Such fine crystal shouldn't go to waste...

He hands the glass to Louis. Louis drinks the blood and stares at it in surprise, then at the dead rat on the fine lace tablecloth.

LESTAT  
I know. It gets cold so fast.

LOUIS  
We can live like this? Off the blood  
of animals?

Lestat shrugs.

LESTAT  
I wouldn't call it living. I'd call  
it surviving. A useful trick if you're  
caught for a month on a ship at sea.

Lestat strokes the belly of the dead rat, studying it sadly.

LESTAT  
There's nothing in the world now  
that doesn't hold some...

LOUIS  
Fascination...

LESTAT  
Yes. And I'm bored with this prattle --

He throws the rat away.

LOUIS  
But we can live without taking human  
life. It's possible.

LESTAT  
Anything is possible. But just try  
it for a week. Come into New Orleans  
and let me show you some real sport!

He rises. Louis follows.

EXT. NEW ORLEANS - NIGHT

A big, lavish drinking place with a raised stage.

Italian actors in buffoonish costumes act crude commedia dell'arte on the stage.

Plantation owners in soiled brocade, lace, crooked wigs watch the show as tavern wenches move about.

LOUIS (V.O.)

This was New Orleans, a magical and magnificent place to live. In which a vampire, richly dressed might attract no more notice in the evening than hundreds of other exotic creatures.

Louis and Lestat by a table, in the shadow of a tree. Teresa, a tavern wench, sits on Lestat's lap, pouring drinks for the two of them. She lifts a fresh glass to Lestat's lips as he flirts with her.

TERESA

Come on, mon cher. The best in the colony. Once you touch this you'll never go to any other tavern again.

LESTAT

You think so, cherie? But what if I'd rather taste your lips?

TERESA

My lips are even sweeter still...

She kisses him. He lets his tongue play with hers, then runs it down her neck. She swoons with pleasure. Then he sinks his teeth gently in her neck, looking playfully behind at Louis, who is appalled and fascinated.

ANTICS ON THE STAGE

Laughter rocks the tavern.

Lestat slips the pale and dead Teresa into a chair beside him and folds her hands on the table. No one notices. He lays gold coins on the table and touches Louis' knee.

LESTAT

Let's get out of here!

Lestat rushes out, thrilled with himself.

EXT. TAVERN - NIGHT

A crowded street. Louis and Lestat emerge from the tavern. Louis looks up at the moon.

LOUIS

Have you ever been caught?

LESTAT

Of course not. It's so easy you almost feel sorry for them.

They walk down the crowded night street, full of ladies in their finery, freed slaves, whores, sailors etc.

LOUIS (V.O.)

Lestat killed two, sometimes three a night. A fresh young girl, that was his favourite for the first of the evening.

INT. FRENCH QUARTER MANSION - BALLROOM

Small orchestra plays for colonial couples in fine wig and garb prancing to a French minuet. Young women sit in chairs along the walls with their chaperones. Young men stand opposite.

LOUIS (V.O.)

But the triumphant kill of Lestat was a young man. They represented the greatest loss to Lestat because they stood on the threshold of the maximum possibility of life.

A youth of preternatural beauty, silhouetted against French windows. He is talking to an elegant widow, seated, holding two manicured poodles. Lestat stares at the youth with longing.

LESTAT

The trick is not to think about it. See that one? The widow St. Clair? she had that gorgeous young fop murder her husband. She's perfect for you. Go ahead.

LOUIS

But how do you know?

LESTAT

Read her thoughts.

LOUIS

I can't.

LESTAT

The dark gift is different for each of us. But one thing is true of everyone. We grow stronger as we go along.

He leads Louis closer to them.



LESTAT

Take my word for it. She blamed a  
slave for his murder. And do you  
know what they did to him?

He smiles at the young man, who smiles in return.

LESTAT

The evildoers are easier. And they  
taste better...

EXT. LAWNS - NIGHT

Lestat walks the youth towards a copse of trees. He looks  
back at Louis, who holds both poodles on a delicate leash,  
walking with the widow. The minuet spills from the french  
windows.

WIDOW ST. CLAIR

Now, young man, you really amaze me!  
I'm old enough to be your grandmother.

She leans towards him conquettishly. Louis, crazed with  
hunger, sees her as beautiful in the moonlight. He allows  
her lips reach his. He takes her in his arms, gently,  
romantically, and sinks in his teeth. She swoons.

WIDOW ST. CLAIR

Yes, that's the melody, I remember  
it. Oh yes...

Louis draws his lips away. She is weak in his arms, but still  
alive. He can't do it. The poodles growl. He shotts out an  
arm and grabs one, then the other.

EXT. TREES. NIGHT.

Lestat, bending over the body of the dead youth. A scream  
pierces the night.

WIDOW ST CLAIR

Murder!!! Murderer!!

EXT. LAWNS - NIGHT

The widow on the grass, her poodles dead beside her. Louis  
is trying to quiet her.

WIDOW ST CLAIR

My little papillions! My  
butterflies!!! He killed them!!!

Lestat comes from nowhere, claps a hand over her mouth and  
breaks her neck. He spits in fury at Louis.

LESTAT

You whining coward of a vampire who  
prowls the night killing rats and  
poodles. You could have finished us  
both!

Louis throws himself on Lestat with extraordinary force,  
pummelling him towards the trees.

LOUIS

What have you done to me? You've  
condemned me to hell.

LESTAT

don't know any hell -

Louis hurls him against tree after tree with a strength he  
never knew he had.

LOUIS

You want to see me kill? Watch me  
kill you then -

He drags him to the ground and throttles him. Lestat looks up  
at him, amazed and amused at the same time.

LESTAT

What strength, my friend, what  
strength. I remember why I chose you  
now.

Lestat squirms from his grip, seemingly effortlessly.

LESTAT

But you can't kill me, Louis. Nor I  
you.

He ruffles Louis' hair, with wry affection.

LESTAT

Feed on what you want, mon cherie.  
Rats, chickens, doves, goats. I'll  
leave you to it and watch you come  
round. Just remember, life without  
me would be even more unbearable...

He smiles. A sly, pleasureable secret smile.

EXT. POINTE DU LAC. NIGHT.

Their carriage draws up to the mansion as the first fingers  
of light spread across the sky.

LOUIS (V.O.)

Being a vampire to him meant revenge.  
Revenge against life-itself. Every  
time he took a life it was revenge.  
and the slaves with a wisdom that  
was denied their masters, began to  
notice...

INT. SLAVE-HUT - NIGHT

In a tiny cabin, a slave family. Kids sleeping on the floor,  
in cribs and cots. The parents sleep on the bed, young,  
beautiful, naked. Beside them is Lestat, who is drinking the  
husband's blood, his hand playing across the breast of the  
wife as he does so. She murmurs in her sleep.

WIFE

Yes... please...

She grabs his fingers and kisses them, thinking him to be  
her husband. Lestat gently disengages himself and leaves.

EXT. SLAVE-HUT - NIGHT

The woman's scream pierces the sky, as Lestat walks into the  
night.

EXT. CHICKEN-COOP - NIGHT

Every chicken is dead, bloodied necks hanging down from the  
cribs. Louis emerges from the entrance, blood on his lips.  
He hears the scream.

EXT. SLAVE QUARTER - NIGHT

The sound of drumming is heard, african, primal. The woman  
runs through the quarters, screaming grief. Others gather at  
doorways, restrain and console her.

EXT. DOVE-COTE - DAY

A beautiful, elaborate eighteenth century dove-cote. Every  
dove inside is dead, pierced at the neck. A black hand throws  
in a flaming torch and it bursts into flame.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

A doll, made in the image of Lestat, is pierced with needles.

EXT. SWAMP BY FIELDS - DAY

Bodies of slaves floating in the swamp, with the bodies of  
goats. Slaves at the edge throw ropes around the bodies,  
pull them towards the shore. The drumming grows louder.

EXT. SLAVE-QUARTERS - NIGHT

Louis walking through. The slaves hush as he approaches, gather in doorways and whisper. He turns and looks at them, sorrowfully. He looks truly like a ghost. Their eyes turn away when they meet his. He walks on.

INT. DINING ROOM IN MANSION - NIGHT

Lestat and Louis sit at the table, the untouched food between them.

LESTAT

Consider yourself lucky. In Paris a vampire has to be clever for many reasons. Here all one needs is a pair of fangs.

LOUIS

Paris? You came from Paris?

LESTAT

As did the one who made me.

LOUIS

Tell me about him. You must have learnt something from him! It had to happen for you as it did for me!

LESTAT

I learnt absolutely nothing. I wasn't give a choice, remember?

LOUIS

But you must know something about the meaning of it all, you must know where we come from, why we...

Lestat spits out in anger.

LESTAT

Why? Why should I know these things? Do you know them?

The drumming grows outside.

LESTAT

(gripping his temples)  
That noise! It's driving me mad!  
We've been in the country for weeks,  
with nothing but that noise!!!

LOUIS

They know about us. They see us dine  
on empty plates and drink from empty  
glasses.

LESTAT

Come the New Orleans then. There's  
an opera on tonight. A real french  
opera! We can dine in splendour!

LOUIS

I respect life, don't you see? For  
each and every human life I have  
respect.

LESTAT

Respect me a little then. I'm the  
only life you know.

Louis stares. Lestat turns childishly, petulantly.

LESTAT

You'll soon run out of chickens,  
Louis...

He walks out, humming a French aria. Louis stares at his  
plate.

EXT. SLAVE QUARTERS - NIGHT

The slaves, gathered on mass around fires. Frenzied drumming,  
dancing. Lestat rides through, scattering the flames. The  
drumming stops. The slaves look towards the house. Slowly,  
they begin to move towards it.

INT. POINTE DU LAC DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Louis, sitting in despair by the table. Yvette, the slave  
girl enters.

YVETTE

Michi Louis? You don't want any  
supper?

Louis laughs harshly.

LOUIS

No, ma cher. I need no supper. Is  
all well at Pointe Du Lac tonight?

Yvette draws closer. Light reveals her beauty.

YVETTE

We worry about you master. When do  
you ride about the fields?

YVETTE

How long since you've been to the  
slave quarters? Everywhere there is  
death. Animals, men. Are you our  
master still at all?

Louis watches her sadly. He's getting hungry. Her throat is  
long and slender, her breasts are gorgeous.

LOUIS

(dazed)

Leave me alone now, Yvette.

YVETTE

I will not go unless you listen to  
me. Send away this new friend of  
yours. The slaves are frightened of  
him. They are frightened of you.

She comes closer, and he can hear her beating heart. She  
touches his hair. He takes her hand and brings it to his  
lips.

LOUIS

I am frightened of myself, Yvette.

He kisses her wrist. She suddenly gasps, sharply, withdraws  
her hand. She sees her wrist is red with blood. She sees the  
blood on his lips. She screams.

Louis stands.

LOUIS

Hush, Yvette -

She screams even louder. Louis clamps his hand over her mouth.  
Her hand grips the table-cloth, pulls, bringing the empty  
glasses and crockery to the floor.

In horror, Louis realises he has broken her neck. He brings  
her cut wrist to his lips, then drops it, revolted. He carries  
her body outside, grief-stricken.

The drumming grows louder.

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

Fires burning in the distance, round the slave-cabins. The  
slaves are gathered at the foot of the mansion steps. They  
see Louis come out, holding the body of Yvette. He is deranged  
with grief.

LOUIS

This place is cursed. Damned, do you  
hear me? And your master is the devil.

He places the body of Yvette in a rocking chair on the varanda.

LOUIS  
Get out while you can. You're free men.

They don't move. They stare at him blankly.

LOUIS  
Unlike me, you are no free men...

He turns behind him, and looks at the mansion, all candleabra and chandeliers lighted, all windows open.

LOUIS  
Do I have to convince you?

He rushed up the stairs, snatches up the candleabra and sets fire to the drapes. He goes from window to window, lighting drapes, lace curtains, everything.

SLAVES POV -- MASTER

Setting fire to the house.

They rush up the stairs with shouts of "STOP HIM, HE'S MAD". A wall of flame gushes out from the interior, blocking their way.

INT. BURNING MANSION - NIGHT

Louis, wandering from room to room of the burning mansion. he sees paintings of his wife consumed by the flames. He is weakening with the fumes, the heat. We can see this in his face, the texture of his skin.

Suddenly a large french window cascades inwards and Lestat stands there, whip in hand. Behind him we can see the morning sky.

LESTAT  
You fool, what have you done?

LOUIS  
What you wouldn't do. It's almost sunrise. It will be the sun or the fire. You said they can kill me. The sun or the fire!

Louis stands there, weakened, then collapses onto the floor. Lestat darts forward and catches him before he drops. He runs out the shattered window, carrying him on his shoulder.

EXT. LARGE GRAVEYARD - DAWN

With many crypts. Louis, unconscious, carried over Lestat's shoulder.

INT. CRYPT

Darkness. Louis lying on the floor of a large crypt. He slowly comes to.

LOUIS  
Where are we?

LESTAT  
Where do you think, my idiot friend?  
We're in a nice filthy cemetery.  
Does this make you happy? Is this  
fitting and proper enough?

Louis laughs softly.

LOUIS  
We belong in hell.

LESTAT  
And what if there is no hell, or  
they don't want us there? Ever think  
of that?

INT. ROOM - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

The vampire sits in silence, as if tired by his story. Malloy speaks, hesitantly.

MALLOY  
You loved Yvette...

LOUIS  
Can a vampire feel love?

MALLOY  
You loved your wife, surely.

LOUIS  
I was human then. Might as well ask  
can an angel feel love. Both are  
blesses or cursed with a certain...  
detachment. Though whether angels  
take as long to learn it as I, I  
will never know.

He looks directly at Malloy, shocking him with his gaze.



LOUIS

Yes, I loved Yvette. As I loved Pointe  
Du Lac. And as with each thing I  
loved, I destroyed it.

EXT. NEW ORLEANS - EVENING

From the sea, at evening, shrouded in mist.

LOUIS (V.O.)

Lestat I did not love. And he  
survived.

INT. INN - EVENING

lavish little supper chamber with coffered bed, fancy French  
furniture. Open to rooftops of colonial city. Louis sits by  
an open window looking out over the city. Behind, we can  
hear the laughter of Lestat and two female voices. Louis  
turns and sees -

Lestat, in the main chamber with two drugged or drunk  
whores. One runs her finger down his chest. The other seems  
out of it.

WHORE 1

You're skin's icy.

LESTAT

Not always...

He presses his thumb on her neck and holds her tight, sinking  
his teeth into her neck. After a time she falls to the bed,  
dead. he turns to the other.

LESTAT

Your friend has no head for wine.

WHORE

She's stupid. I can warm that cold  
skin of yours better than she can.

LESTAT

Do you think so?

He rubs her breast.

WHORE

Why you're warm now.

LESTAT

Ah, but the price is pretty high.  
Your sweet friend - I exhausted her.

He bites her in turn, drinks her blood. She does into the swoon.

Louis looks on in disgust. He stands.

LOUIS  
I'm leaving you. I can't stand this  
any longer.

Lestat pulls away from the whore.

LESTAT  
What, no flowery speeches? About  
what a monster I am? What a vulgar  
fiend?

LOUIS  
I'm not interested in you. You disgust  
me. I'm interested in my own nature  
and know I can't trust you to tell  
me the truth about me.

LESTAT  
What do you imagine you are Louis?

LOUIS  
I don't pretend to know.

LESTAT  
Don't you understand, Louis, that  
you alone of all creatures can see  
death with impunity... you alone  
under the rising moon can strike  
like the hand of God.

The girl moans.

LOUIS  
Lestat, she's alive!!!!

LESTAT  
Vampires are killers. Predators,  
who's all seeing eyes were meant to  
give them detachment.

The girl moans again, open her eyes.

LOUIS  
The girl, Lestat -

LESTAT  
I know. Let her alone.

He slashes her wrist with his teeth, and lets the blood drip  
into a glass.

LESTAT

You think you can be human. You think  
you can go back. But you can't. You  
live off the blood of rats now Louis.  
How human is that?

The girl moans again. Lestat drinks that glass.

LESTAT

Lie still, love...

The girl begins to scream. Lestat picks her up.

LESTAT

You're tired love, you want to sleep.

He walks to his coffin, puts her inside and sits on the lid.  
We hear muffled screaming and banging from inside.

LOUIS

Why do you do this Lestat?

LESTAT

I like to do it. I enjoy it. Take  
you aesthete's taste to purer things.  
Kill them swiftly if you will, but  
do it! For now doubt, you are a killer  
Louis. Ah!

He stands up. The girl pushes the lid off, hysterical. She  
looks at Louis.

GIRL

It's a coffin, a coffin! Get me out!

LESTAT

Of course it's a coffin. You're dead,  
love.

Louis screams at Lestat

LOUIS

Lestat - finish this -

LESTAT

You finish her - if you feel so much -

The girl grabs Louis and pleads.

GIRL

You won't let me die, will you? You'll  
save me?

LESTAT

But it's too late, love. Look at  
your wrist, your breast.

He picks her up again. He turns to Louis laughing.

LESTAT

Unless I make her one of us...

LOUIS

NO!!!

LESTAT

THEN YOU KILL HER!!!!

The girl screams. Louis puts his hands to his ears. Then Lestat, in a fit of pique puts his teeth to her neck. She dies at last.

A terrible silence descends. Lestat looks at Louis.

LOUIS

My God... to think you... are all I  
have to learn from...

LESTAT

In the old world, they called it the  
dark gift, Louis. And I gave it to  
you.

Louis leaves without a word.

EXT. DANK NEW ORLEANS BACK STREETS - NIGHT

A rat scurried down a gutter, then another and another. Louis' hand graps the rat. We see him from behind, walking down the street, gripping one, then another.

LOUIS (V.O.)

Am I damned? Am I from the devil? Is  
my very nature that of a devil? And  
all the while, as these dreaded  
questions caused me to neglect my  
thirst, my thirst grew hotter, my  
veins were threads of pain in my  
flesh, my temples throbbed.

A smaller side street, in which every house is marked with an X. The street is crawling with rats, and Louis is following them. A man passes with a lantern.

MAN

Don't go that way Monsieur. It's the  
plague. Go back the way you came.

Louis smiles bitterly at these words, repeating them to himself.

LOUIS  
The way I came...

He walks on, following the rats.

LOUIS (V.O.)  
...and finally, when I could stand  
it no longer, I stood in an empty  
desolate street and heard the sound  
of a child crying.

A house, the door slightly open, marked with an X. The sound of a child crying inside. Louis walks towards it.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

A little girl, pulling at a figure in a rocking chair.

CLAUDIA  
Mama, please wake up. Mama, I'm  
frightened, please wake up.

As Louis enters, he sees the woman is dead. Her eyes are being eaten away by rats.

Louis gasps in horror. Claudia turns. She is a radiant doll or angel as she stretches out her hand to Louis.

CLAUDIA  
Monsieur, please help us. Papa's  
waiting for us at the ship. Please  
wake mama, Monsieur.

She runs to him. Instinctively, he gathers her in his arms. He looks down pitying on her beautiful face.

LOUIS (V.O.)  
And if I am damned, why do I feel  
such pity for her gaunt face? Why do  
I wish to warm her tiny arms? Comfort  
her beating heart?

She snuggles into him, suddenly utterly secure. She tugs at his hair, brings his head down towards her. And we see Louis shiver, as his lips go to her neck.

Her breathing becomes calm as she goes into the swoon. Gradually another sound replaces it.

LESTAT'S LAUGHTER, GROWING LOUDER AND LOUDER.

Suddenly Louis backs away, caught redhanded, the child in his arms. He sees Lestat slapping his knee and laughing in the doorway.

LESTAT

Ah, my philospher, my martyr. "Never take a human life". Well you must admit it is funny. Or is it merely touching? I'm not sure.

Louis stares at hte unconscious Claudia in horror, then lets her slip gently into a chair. Shamefully he wipes his mouth, sees the tiny wounds on her throat.

Lestat snatches up the dead mother from the chair and begins to dance with her in great circles, humming and talking. Her head falls back. Black water flows from her mouth.

LESTAT

Let's make some party of it, shall we? Maybe there's some life in the old lady yet?

Louis flees into the street.

LESTAT

Come back, Louis, you are what you are. The plague would have got her within hours anyway. Merciful Death how you love your precious guilt.

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

Louis running through an assortment of streets. All the night life of New Orleans flows by him.

LOUIS (V.O.)

For years I had not savoured a human. And when I had Lestat's words made sense to me. I knew peace only when I killed and when I heard her heart in that terrible rhythm I knew again what peace could be. Yet even then I could not contenance it...

EXT. WATERFRONT - DAWN

Fingers of light in the sky. Louis, pale and shivering, walks splashing through the water. He comes to a huge sewer-pipe, crowded with rats. He crawls inside.

EXT. WATERFRONT - SOME EVENINGS LATER

The same sewer-pipe. Now the bodies of dead rats lie all around. A pirogue of fine leather boots splash through the water - LESTAT'S.

INT. SEWER-PIPE - EVENING

Louis huddled there, so pale and shivering he seems close to death. Lestat comes through.

LESTAT  
All I need to find you Louis is follow  
the corpses of rats.

He bends down to him, surprisingly gently and puts his own coat around him.

LESTAT  
Pain is terrible for you. You feel  
it like no other creature because  
you are a vampire. You don't want it  
to go on.

LOUIS  
No...

They emerge from the sewer and walk along the waterfront.

LESTAT  
Do what it is in your nature to do.  
And you will feel as you felt with  
that child in your arms.

LOUIS  
Oh God Lestat. I felt peace. I felt  
an end to the craving.

LESTAT  
That and more.

He puts his arm around Louis, to stop his shivering.

LESTAT  
Evil is a point of view. God kills,  
indiscriminately, and so shall we.  
For no creatures under God are as we  
are, none so like him as ourselves.

LOUIS  
Is God merciless? Greedy and cruel?

LESTAT

Ah, but we have even more in common  
with our creator. come, I am like a  
mother tonight. I want a child.

Louis is baffled. He follows.

INT. INN - SUPPER ROOM

Lestat enters.

LESTAT

She's here, your wounded one.

LOUIS

What are you saying?

LESTAT

You need company, Louis. More  
congenial than mine...

Lestat holds up a candle and walks towards a large four-poster  
bed. Claudia lies there, angelic, under the coverlet, two  
marks on her neck.

LOUIS

Lestat!

LESTAT

You remember how you wanted her, the  
taste of her -

LOUIS

I didn't want to kill her.

LESTAT

Don't worry, Louis, you're conscience  
is clear. You left her alive.

Lestat shakes her gently.

LESTAT

Claudia, Claudia, listen to me. You're  
ill, my precious and I'm going to  
give you what you need to get well.

LOUIS

Lestat, what do you mean?

Louis runs at him, but Lestat brushes him aside effortlessly,  
so he falls to the floor. Lestat bites his wrist and presses  
the bleeding wound to the child's mouth... He winces in pain.



LESTAT

That's it dear. More. You must drink  
it to get well.

Claudia sucks on the wound, reviving, making little noises  
like a person waking from sleep.

Louis rises to his feet as Claudia clutches Lestat's arm,  
sucking the blood fiercely. Lestat moans.

LESTAT

Stop, that's enough. No more.

He pulls her loose and she growls and stares at him with big  
clear astonished eyes.

CLAUDIA

I want more.

LOUIS

What have you done?

Lestat puts her down on the bed and sits beside her, holding  
his wrist, obviously in pain.

CLAUDIA

More.

LESTAT

Yes, cherie, of course you want more.  
And I'll show you how to get it. You  
drink from mortals, my beauty, but  
from me? Never again.

Still suffering, Lestat pulls the bell-rope.

CLOSE ON CLAUDIA

Being transformed. Becoming white yet robust, bright-eyed  
yet crazed. She shakes her beautiful curls and the dust falls  
from them. They are shining in the candlelight.

Louis cannot stop looking at her. He does not notice as --

The MAID enters.

MAID

Ah, quelle Belle enfant!

The maid comes near the bed, kneels in front of Claudia.  
Lestat lays his hand on the maid's throat and Claudia watches  
keenly.

LESTAT

Gently, cherie. They are so innocent.  
They must not be made to suffer.

Claudia lunges for the throbbing vein in the neck, locking  
on to the flowing blood.

The Maid is transfixed.

Close on Louis, his anguish, his fascinated horror.

LOUIS

You are the devil! You are the  
instrument of Satan!

LESTAT

That's enough, cherie. Stop before  
the heart stops.

He lets the dead maid onto the floor. Claudia looks at the  
corpse.

CLAUDIA

I want some more.

LESTAT

It's bet in the beginning, lest the  
death takes you down with it. yes,  
that's it. My child. My beloved child.

Lestat and Claudia sit on the Louis XVI settee. Claudia is a  
vision, a doll made out of pearl. Animated, voice crisp.

CLAUDIA

Where is Mamma?

The words echo in Louis' head, as he puts his hands to his  
ears.

LESTAT

Mamma's gone to Heaven, cherie, like  
that sweet lady over there. They all  
go to Heaven. And you did very well,  
cherie. Not a drop spilt. Very good!  
You're going to be our child now.

Lestat takes out his comb and begins to comb her hair.

LESTAT

Your mama's left you with us. She  
wants you to be happy.

LOUIS

(whisper)  
You are the devil!

LOUIS  
You are the instrument of Satan!

LESTAT  
Shhhh! Do you want to frighten our  
little daughter?

CLAUDIA  
I'm not your daughter.

LESTAT  
Yes you are, my dearest. You are  
mine and Louis' daughter. You see  
Louis was going to leave us. He was  
going to go away. But now he's not.  
He's going to stay and make you happy.

Claudia runs over to him. She smiles at him.

CLAUDIA  
Lou...eee...

Louis is conflicted. He cannot leave her. He touches her  
cheeks, her hair. Same as his. Vampire skin and hair. He  
draws in his breath, shocked by her beauty, then he embraces  
her as a father might a daughter. He looks over her shoulder  
to Lestat.

LOUIS  
You fiend. You monster.

LESTAT SMILES

LESTAT  
One happy family.

INT. ROOM - SAN FRANCISCO

Malloy is open mouthed.

MALLOY  
A child vampire!

He sees the tape has run out. He rapidly and clumsily sticks  
in another.

LOUIS  
Shall we go on?

MALLOY  
He did it to make you stay with him!

LOUIS  
Perhaps. He knew me. He knew I would  
love her more than the waking world.

LOUIS

But there was more to it than that.  
Perhaps in the end he did it -- to  
show me that he could. For he lavished  
affection on her, there was no doubt  
about that. Life was very different  
with madame Claudia, as you can  
imagine...

EXT. NEW SPANISH TOWNHOUSE - (RUE ROYALE, NEW ORLEANS)

Two husky movers bring in furniture through the back  
courtyard, past the fountain and the banana trees, up the  
back stairs and into ---

INT. FLAT

Striped wallpaper gives way to flowers in the bedrooms. Huge  
four-poster beds in the bedrooms, and large chests, as big  
as coffins standing against the wall. Everywhere there are  
candles and pretty Louis XVI furniture. Lestat gives  
instructions to the movers.

WE MOVE INTO --

DIMLY LIT PARLOUR

We see Claudia draped in lace standing on a petit point chair  
as a DRESSMAKER measure out a garment.

Louis can be seen, in an inner room.

DRESSMAKER

Monsuier, I need more light. I shall  
go blind if you do not bring me a  
lamp, or let me fit this child during  
the day. Ouch!

She has pricked her hand. A spot of blood appears on her  
finger Claudia takes her hand.

CLAUDIA

Let me kiss it better...

Claudia brings the hand to her lips. The dressmaker abruptly  
pulls her finger away, in pain again.

CU her finger - two holes showing.

LOUIS (V.O.)

A little child she was, but also a  
fierce killer, now capable of the  
ruthless pursuit of blood with all a  
child's demanding.

Lestat walks through - sees the dressmaker lying dead at Claudia's feet, Claudia still on the chair in the half-finished dress.

LESTAT

Claudia, Claudia, will you never learn? Who will we get now to finish your dress? A little practicality, cherie...

INT. LOUIS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

LOUIS (V.O.)

She would sleep in my coffin, daily, curl her child's fingers round my hair as she dreamt of I know not what...

Claudia and Louis, sleeping in a coffin together, Claudia's fingers curling his hair.

INT. CLAUDIA'S BEDROOM

Claudia playing with dolls, each as perfect and beautifully dressed as she is.

LOUIS (V.O.)

Mute and beautiful, she played with dolls, dressing them and undressing them by the hour.

INT. PARLOUR - NIGHT

Claudia tinkling with her child's hands on the piano, picking out a hesitant tune.

LOUIS (V.O.)

Mute and beautiful, she killed. And to watch her kill was chilling.

EXT. SQUARE - NIGHT

The tinkling of Claudia's piano is heard, over -

A well-dressed lady, walking through a square lit by gaslight. The lady hears a child's sobbing and stops, turns.

POV --

Claudia, the picture of lost innocence, sitting on a bench and crying.

WOMAN

Why are you crying, child?

The woman, all solicitude, goes to Claudia.

WOMAN  
Are you lost, my love?

CLAUDIA  
Mama...

WOMAN  
Hush now, don't cry, We'll find her...

CLAUDIA  
Mama...

The woman takes Claudia in her arms. Claudia nestles her head in her shoulder, her teeth near her neck.

LOUIS (V.O.)  
They found death fast in those days,  
before she learnt to play with the,  
to delay the moment till she had  
taken what she wanted...

INT. PARLOUR - NIGHT

A stern, stiff piano-teacher (male) beating time with a ruler as Claudia picks out scales on the piano. He raps her on the knuckles.

PIANO-TEACHER  
The thumb girl! Mind the thumb!

Claudia glares at him, then returns to playing, improving rapidly.

INT. DOLL-SHOP - NIGHT

Piano music over. Mozart, now well played.

Claudia staring at a glass case, inside of which are an array of eighteenth century dolls. An old doll-maker looks down on her.

DOLLMAKER  
They are expensive, my dear. Maybe  
too expensive for a young girl like  
you...

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Claudia walking along, clutching the doll.

INT. DOLL-SHOP - NIGHT

The dollmaker lying dead, two puncture marks in his throat, his dolls scattered all around him.

EXT. UNDERTAKER'S - NIGHT

Claudia and Louis looking through the window at a display of coffins. Claudia point at the smallest one.

LOUIS (V.O.)  
 She grew, yet stayed the same. She  
 wanted a bed of her own, yet would  
 climb back into mine.

INT. CLAUDIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The child's coffin on the floor. The lid lifts. Claudia emerges, yawning, wanders through the flat into. -

LOUIS' BEDROOM

Where his coffin sits. She slides the lid off, and curls in beside him.

INT. PARLOUR - NIGHT

Claudia playing the piano, now with remarkable dexterity. The piano-teacher sits mute beside her. As she plays, he topples over and falls to the ground. We see the puncture-marks in his neck. Lestat, hearing the noise, comes in.

LESTAT  
 Claudia, Claudia! Didn't I tell you,  
 never in the house!

Claudia smiles to herself, keeps playing.

INT. CLAUDIA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CANARIES sing in a cage, above a child's coffin.

Claudia is writing at a secretaire. She is writing in a diary with a quill pen in an adult hand. She murmurs the date as she writes.

CLAUDIA  
 September 21st, one hour after sunset.  
 The sky is still violet, the way  
 Louis loves and as always Lestat was  
 gone when we rose.

She looks up and sees Louis in the doorway, watching her.

LOUIS  
How did you learn to write, Claudia?

CLAUDIA  
The way I learn everything. By  
watching you.

She closes the diary.

CLAUDIA  
But you never let me see you kill,  
Louis.

LOUIS  
Lestat taught you all you need to  
know about that.

CLAUDIA  
Infant death, he calls me. Sweet  
daughter death. You know what he  
calls you? Merciful death.

LOUIS  
He jests.

CLAUDIA  
Why does he call you that?

LOUIS  
Hush, Claudia don't talk about such  
things. Show me your book.

She opens it. Inside there is a beautiful pen and ink portrait  
of Louis.

LOUIS  
Claudia! You did that?

CLAUDIA  
Sit still. It's not finished -

She begins to fill in the sketch.

LOUIS (V.O.)  
Time can pass fast for mortals when  
they're happy. With us it was the  
same.

EXT. RUE ROYALE - NIGHT (1800'S)

Street lamps are oil at this period. Houses are now tall two-  
story Spanish style. Streets are flagstone. Passing carriages  
are black.



LOUIS (V.O.)

It was a very different life. And a new century was beginning. what had once been a small godforsaken French colony was growing into a great port, giving us an endless train of magnificent strangers...

Claudia, Louis and Lestat, dressed in the same clothes walking through a racuous carnival with sideshows. Crowd milling around, sailors, whores, children, thieves, freed slaves, Indians. They pass a Wild West display, jugglers, fire-eaters, three-card tricksters...

LOUIS (V.O.)

All human life was here, for the taking. And we took, all three of us, in our different ways...

They come to a raised platform where a troupe of perfectly-formed midgets do a burlesque show.

Claudia stops. She stares, at these small, perfect creatures like herself, intrigued and troubled.

Louis and Lestat walk on, not noticing as --

CLAUDIA

Circles the troupe. She comes to a small tent, behind it. At the entrance stands a midget youth.

YOUTH

You want to come inside, lovely?

CLAUDIA walks up to him.

YOUTH

Ever been kissed?

Claudia shakes her head. He kisses her. Claudia allow her to be kissed, then bites his tongue. he youth struggles, as Claudia holds him and drains him. She lets him go as Louis appears behind her.

CLAUDIA

She's like me, Louis. Small and yet not small at all. Like me.

Louis hurriedly draws her away.

LOUIS (V.O.)

I watched her grow yet stay the same, her doll-like face possessed of adult eyes, eery, powerful, seductive...

INT. FLAT - NIGHT

Claudia playing the piano, now like a demonic Liszt. Louis writing.

Lestat appears in the doorway. He has a big box in his arms.

CLAUDIA

Another doll? I have ten, you realise.

FOCUS ON early 19th Century French dolls -- wood, glass, wax, bisque -- all around the bedroom, on chairs, on the bed. Some newish, some tattered old.

LESTAT

Well, I thought you could use another.

He hands her the box. It is a fine Parisian Jumeau doll. She likes it and strokes its face.

CLAUDIA

Why always on this night?

LESTAT

What night? What do you mean?

CLAUDIA

You always give me the doll on the same night of the year.

LESTAT

I didn't realise.

CLAUDIA

Is this my birthday?

He examines the other dolls.

LESTAT

Some of these are so old and tattered. You should throw them away.

CLAUDIA

I have. Or there would be twice as many.

LESTAT

But you're the fairest by far.

CLAUDIA

You dress me like a doll. You make my hair like a doll. Why?

Lestat doesn't answer. Claudia stands up quickly, and strides out into the -

PARLOUR, where Louis is reading by the window. She walks to a mirrored cabinet, takes out a scissors and begins cutting her hair.

CLAUDIA

You want me to be a doll forever?

LOUIS

Claudia - don't -

CLAUDIA

Why not?

She continues cutting. She sees Lestat emerge from her bedroom in the mirror behind her then turns to him, an angelic little boy's face now with soft curls around her face.

CLAUDIA

Can't I change, like everybody else?

She walks past him, back into her bedroom and slams the door.

A beat. Louis looks from the mass of blonde hair on the floor to Lestat. Then a HORRID SCREAM pierces the silence. More screams, which become roars.

INT. CLAUDIA'S BEDROOM

She stands before the dressing-table, all her long hair grown back over her shoulders. She holds it with both hands, screaming and screaming. Lestat and Louis come through the door.

CLAUDIA

Which of you did it? Which of you made me the way I am?

LESTAT

What you are? You would be something other than you are?

CLAUDIA

And if I cut my hair again?

LESTAT

It will grow back again!

CLAUDIA

But it wasn't always so! I had a mother once! And Louis - he had a wife! He was mortal the same as she! And so was I!

LOUIS

Claudia -

She turns on Lestat.

CLAUDIA  
You made us what we are, didn't you?

LESTAT  
Stop her Louis!

CLAUDIA  
DID YOU DO IT TO ME????

She runs at him with the scissors, scoring his face. The cut heals. She scores it again. It heals again. She stares at him in horror.

CLAUDIA  
(whispering)  
How did you do it?

LESTAT  
And why should I tell you? It's in my power.

CLAUDIA  
Why yours alone? Tell me how it was done!!!!

LESTAT  
Be glad I made you what you are!  
You'd be dead not if I hadn't.

He storms out. Louis goes to Claudia and picks her up in his arms.

LOUIS  
(tenderly)  
We're immortal. You've always known that.

CLAUDIA  
Tell me why...you've got to tell me...

Louis carries her outside, onto the porch. There is an old flower-seller going by.

LOUIS  
You see the old woman? That will never happen to you. You'll never grow old. You will never die.

CLAUDIA  
And it means something else too, doesn't it? I shall never, ever grow up.

She clutches Louis desperately.

CLAUDIA

I hate him. But I cannot bear to  
lose you. You're the only companion  
I have, forever. You taught me  
everything I know. Please tell me  
Louis. Tell me how it came to be  
that I am this... thing...

Louis strokes her beautiful face, her hair.

LOUIS

Come... I've something to show you...

EXT. NEW ORLEANS STREETS - NIGHT

Louis walking, holding Claudia as if he was about to lose  
her.

LOUIS (V.O.)

Though everything was changed, through  
the years had warped the contours of  
the streets, I found my way there,  
aware that I'd always known where it  
was and avoided it, not wanting to  
pass the doorway where I'd first  
heard Claudia cry.

Louis back in the same street, outside the same house. He  
stands with Claudia at the window. There is a family inside,  
a picture of domestic tranquility.

LOUIS

I heard you crying. You were there  
in a room with your mother. You were  
hugging her for warmth, crying  
pitifully as you had been for days.  
Because your mother was dead...

Claudia stares at him, suddenly very cold, very alert.

LOUIS

I opened the shutters... I came into  
the room... I felt pity for you.  
Pity, but something else.

He can't go on. Claudia's eyes are remorseless.

CLAUDIA

You... fed on me?

LOUIS

And he found me with you. I ran,  
sickened at what I'd done. Then he

LOUIS  
cut his wrist and fed you from him.  
I tried to stop him, but you were a  
vampire then. And have been every  
night hereafter.

CLAUDIA  
You both did it?

LOUIS  
I took your life. He gave you another  
one.

Claudia speaks through indrawn breath.

CLAUDIA  
And here it is. And I hate you both.

She runs.

INT. ROOM SAN FRANCISCO

Malloy and Louis.

MALLOY  
But why did you tell her?

LOUIS  
How could I not? She had to know.

MALLOY  
And did you lose her? Did she go?

LOUIS  
Where would she have gone? She was a  
child, and beautiful, heartbreaking  
merciless child. And I had made her  
that...

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

Louis, walking the streets, shivering.

LOUIS  
I walked all night. I walked as I  
walked years before when my mind  
swam with guilt at the thought of  
killing. I found myself at the  
Cathedral.

A cathedral rising out of the mist, the doors open.

LOUIS  
I thought of all the things I had  
done and couldn't undo. And I longed  
for one second's peace...

Louis walks towards the doors, inside.

INT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

Louis enters. The dim lights of candles. A sacristan tending the altar, an old woman praying -- otherwise empty.

LOUIS  
I had no fear. If anything I longed  
for something to happen, for the  
stones to tremble as I entered the  
foyer.

Louis walking down the nave of the church. He stops by the alter.

LOUIS  
I almost genuflected from old habit.  
I almost prayed.

Louis sits in a pew.

LOUIS  
And then it struck me.

Louis' POV - the cross, the statues, the tabernacle.

LOUIS  
What if the statues gave an image to  
nothing? What if I was the  
supernatural in this cathedral? The  
only immortal under this roof. And I  
felt nothing but loneliness.  
Loneliness to the point of madness.

Suddenly a hand is laid on his shoulder. Louis almost jumps.  
He turns and sees the face of a grey-haired priest.

PRIEST  
You wish to go to confession? I was  
about to lock up the church.

Louis stares at him, tears in his eyes.

PRIEST  
You are troubled, aren't you? Can I  
help?

LOUIS  
It's too late, too late -

PRIEST

No, it's never too late. Come...

The priest gestures to the confessional. Louis rises, slowly.

INT. CONFESSIONAL.

Louis, kneeling in the darkness. The hatch slides back.

LOUIS

Bless me father for I have sinned so often and so long, I don't know how to change nor beg for forgiveness.

PRIEST

Son, God is infinite in his capacity to forgive. Tell him from your heart.

LOUIS

Murders, father, death after death. The woman who died two nights ago in Jackson Square, I killed her. And thousands of others before her. I have walked the streets of New Orleans like the Grim reaper. And fed on human life for my own. I am a vampire, father, and have turned the one I love most of all into one too --The hatch slams down. Louis rises, confused, and the door is flung open, the priest stands there.

PRIEST

Do you know the meaning of sacrilege?

Louis rises. Walks out.

LOUIS

Then there is no mercy.

His face comes into the light. The priest steps back, open-mouthed.

LOUIS

You talk of sacrilege. Why if God exists does he suffer me to exist?

He bares his fangs. The priest runs, screaming. Gets to the bellrope, begins to ring the bell. Louis swoops on him.

LOUIS

Why does he suffer me to live?

Louis takes him, lifting him from the floor, till his feet stop kicking.



INT. FLAT - NIGHT

Louis enters, slidently, like a corpse. He hears a voice behind him.

CLAUDIA  
Locked together in hatred --

He turns, sees her sitting in the darkness. She is wearing a tiny nightgown fo stiched lace and pearls, wierdly adult and seductive. She comes towards him.

CLAUDIA  
But I can't hate you Louis.

She sprays perfume over her body as she comes nearer.

CLAUDIA  
Is this the aroma of a mortal child?

She whispers.

CLAUDIA  
Louis. Lover.

She kisses his cheek.

CLAUDIA  
I was mortal to you. You gave me  
your immortal kiss. You became my  
mother and my father. And so I'm  
yours. Forever.

She takes his face in her hands.

CLAUDIA  
But now's the time to end it, Louis.  
Now's the time to leave him.

LOUIS  
He'll never let us go.

Claudia smiles.

CLAUDIA  
Oh... really?

EXT. DOCKLANDS - NEW ORLEANS - NIGHT

A sailing ship, by the docks. Louis and Claudia talking to a shipping-clerk.

LOUIS (V.O.)  
So we made plans. She was convinced  
there were others of our kind in

LOUIS (V.O.)  
Europe, that they would have the  
answers Lestat couldn't provide.  
Lestat whom she now hated, who she  
thought she could be free of. I  
doubted, but then she had a surprise  
in store...

INT. FLAT - NIGHT

Lestat playing the piano. Louis reading. Claudia enters,  
wearing a cape and hat. She walks to the piano, sits at the  
end of the piano and stares at him as he plays.

LESTAT  
What is it now? You irritate me!  
Your very presence irritates me!

CLAUDIA  
(sweetly)  
Does it?

LESTAT  
Yes. And I'll tell you something  
else! I've met someone who will make  
a better vampire than both of you.

CLAUDIA  
Is that supposed to frighten me?

LESTAT  
You're spoiled because you're an  
only child. You need a brother. Or I  
do. I'm weary of you both.

CLAUDIA  
I suppose we could people the world  
with vampires, the three of us.

LESTAT  
Not you my dear.

CLAUDIA  
You're a liar. But you upset my plans.

LESTAT  
What plans?

CLAUDIA  
I came to make peace with you, even  
if you're the father of lies. I want  
things to be as they were.

Louis perks up, puzzled.

LESTAT  
Stop pestering me then!

CLAUDIA  
Oh, Lestat. I must do more than that.  
I've brought a present for you.

LESTAT  
Then I hope its a beautiful woman  
with endowments you will never  
possess.

Claudia stares at him for a moment.

CLAUDIA  
Better than that.

She takes his hand and leads him into an inner room. Louis follows behind.

CLAUDIA  
You haven't fed enough. I can tell  
by your colour.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Two beautiful youths, lying asleep on a couch, by a table full with a half-eaten meal. Lestat sighs.

LESTAT  
Oh, Claudia, you've outdone yourself.  
Where did you find them?

CLAUDIA  
Drunk on brandy wine. A thimblefull.  
I thought of you when I saw them.

LESTAT  
We forgive each other then?

Claudia stares at him, sitting. She nods.

Lestat bites into the neck of one of the youths, sucks greedily and horribly. Claudia watches him without expression. He finished one, is about to take the other when he staggers. He looks at Claudia.

LESTAT  
Absinthe? You gave then absinthe?

CLAUDIA  
No. Laudanum.

Lestat stares wildly at her, tries to move towards her, then slips to the floor.

LESTAT

Laudanum!

CLAUDIA

Yes. It killed them, unfortunately.  
But it keeps the blood warm.

Lestat tries to rise.

LESTAT

Ah Louis, Louis, she killed them...  
and let me drink...

Louis watches, apalled. He goes to move.

CLAUDIA

Don't Louis --

LESTAT

Louis, put me in my coffin...

CLAUDIA

I'll put you in your coffin. Forever.

She pulls a knife out from under her shawl, walks rapidly to him and slashes his throat. Blood explodes from it.

LOUIS

Claudia! Don't do this thing!!!

LESTAT

Louis, Louis, I gave you the gift ---  
help me ---

Claudia lacerates his face. Blood pours from everywhere. She plunges the knife in his chest. He falls back, fangs bared, clutching the knife. Claudia leaps on him then, bites deep into his neck as he dies. Louis screams, runs forward, pulls her away.

LOUIS

What have you done, Claudia -

He drags her off Lestat, tries to pull her out of the room. She hisses at him.

CLAUDIA

Louis! Look what's happening to him!!

Louis looks. The floor is a sea of blood. Lestat has begun to shrivel, as if he'd been a bag of blood. His skin is shrivelling against his bones like parchment, his eyes are slipping back into his skull-like face. His lush, beautiful hair remains unchanged. But his clothes are virtually being emptied of the body.

It is no more than bones, wrapped in paper and the pupils of the eyes suddenly roll up into the papered skull.

LOUIS

Lestat. Oh, God forgive us.

CLAUDIA

Don't mock me, Louis. Help me.

She stares at the shrivelled skeleton in its skin wrapping. She is fascinated. She sees the vampiric blood flow all over the floor. She touches it and brings her finger to her lips.

CLAUDIA

Goodnight, sweet prince, may flights of devils wing you to your rest.

Louis walks forward, touches the skeleton, the blonde hair.

LOUIS

He's dead, Claudia, dead.

CLAUDIA

The one good lesson he taught me,  
Louis. Never drink from the dead.

She stands up, all business suddenly.

CLAUDIA

Help me. We must get rid of him.

She drags the coverlet from the table, knocking the crockery over the dead youths, and wraps Lestat's skeleton in it. She takes a bunch of chrysanthemums and places them in his skeleton hands.

CLAUDIA

Should we burn him? Bury him? What would he have liked, Louis?

LOUIS

Don't mock, Claudia...

CLAUDIA

The swamp...

EXT. CARRIAGE - NIGHT

Louis whipping the horses. Claudia beside him. Lestat's skeleton in the back, with the bodies of the two dead youths.

CLAUDIA

In Europe, Louis. We shall meet our own kind. Find the one who made him. Learn what it means.

LOUIS

And suppose the one who made him  
knows nothing and the vampire who  
made him knows nothing, and it goes  
back, nothing proceeding from nothing,  
until there is nothing! And we must  
live with the knowledge that there  
is no knowledge.

The carriage pulls up by a swamp. Mist everywhere. Overhanging  
creepers.

LOUIS

And if we find the one who made him?  
Do we tell him we destroyed his own  
creation? The vampire Lestat?

Louis drags out the bodies of the boys. He slides them into  
the waters of the swamp. We see ripples in the water and the  
churning of alligators, as they attack the corpses. Louis  
takes Lestat's skeleton in his arms. He slides it into the  
waters. The alligators speed towards it.

CLAUDIA

He belongs with those reptiles, Louis.  
He deserved to die.

LOUIS

Then maybe so do we. Every night of  
our lives. He was my brother. My  
maker. He gave me this life, whatever  
it is.

CLAUDIA

I did it for us, Louis. So we could  
be free.

He stands there, saying nothing.

CLAUDIA

Louis, look at me.

LOUIS

(bitterly)  
I can't. Go away from me.

Claudia is shocked to her core. She steps back. Louis stares  
at the rippling waters. Gradually the movement of alligators  
stops. Then he hears a sound he hasn't heard in years. Soft,  
chocking. He turns, sees Claudia sitting by a cypress tree,  
like a little girl for the first time in years. She is weeping  
copiously.

LOUIS

Claudia - You're crying -

We see her face, tears of blood running down it. She is heartbroken, lost.

CLAUDIA  
You never talked to me like that -  
in all these years.

LOUIS  
And you never cried -

CLAUDIA  
I can't bear it when you do - I would  
die rather than lose you Louis. I  
would die the way he died.

Louis gathers her in his arms.

LOUIS  
Hush, Claudia, hush now my dear -

CLAUDIA  
Tell me you don't hate me Louis. I  
did it for you -

Louis walks her towards the carriage.

LOUIS  
I love you Claudia. Always. And we  
are free now, Claudia. No Lestat.  
Just the two of us, beginning the  
great adventure of our lives.

He lifts her into the carriage and drives off, leaving the silent waters of the swamp.

INT. FLAT - NIGHT

Sturdy mullato workmen lifting cases and trunks out of the apartment. All the furniture is covered in white sheets. Claudia dressed in a cap and hat, is playing the piano by the light of one remaining oil-lamp.

Louis comes from her room with the cage of canaries.

LOUIS  
The birds. We forgot about the birds.  
There's nothing for it but to let  
them go.

He opens the cage, and the canaries fly around the room.

There is a knocking on the door. Claudia falters.

CLAUDIA  
What was that?

LOUIS

The workmen must have a trunk - don't  
stop, cherie -

He goes downstairs. Claudia plays a moment, then stops,  
perturbed. She goes to the window. Then sees something out  
there that makes her face go white. She screams.

CLAUDIA

Louis!!!

THE STAIRWAY --

Louis walking to the door. The knocking gets louder.

THE PARLOUR --

Claudia runs for the stairs, after Louis.

THE HALLWAY --

Louis reaches the door. The knocking gets louder. He opens  
the door as -

CLAUDIA -

Reaches the stairs. She screams -

CLAUDIA

Don't Louis -

But Louis has opened the door. Nothing there. He looks back  
at Claudia, puzzled, then at the door again when, swooping  
into his vision comes the nightmare image of --

LESTAT --

In filthy swamp-soaked rags, robust again, but his flesh  
shrivelled, covered in scars, his eyes riddled, bloodshot.  
he roars.

LESTAT

WHERE IS SHE? WHERE IS THAT ACCURSED  
CHILD?

Louis throws his body against the door, slamming it on  
Lestat's reaching hand. The hand withdraws, as Lestat roars.  
Louis bolts the door.

Louis runs up the stairs, sweeps Claudia in his arms, watching  
appalled as the door shudders with the force of Lestat's body.

IN THE PARLOUR

Louis runs through with Claudia in his arms.



LOUIS

It can't be -

CLAUDIA

It is! Take the back stairwell -

Suddenly Lestat crashes through the casement window, scattering blood everywhere, reefing himself on the shattered glass. He tumbles to the floor and gets unsteadily to his feet.

LESTAT

GIVE ME HER LOUIS!!

Louis throws Claudia behind him and hurls himself on Lestat, who fights like a ravening animal, bits of his broken body coming off in the process. Then with a terrifying effort, Lestat hurls Louis off, goes for Claudia, who grabs the poker from the fireplace, scatters burning coals over him. He falls back, then comes at her again, as the drapes catch fire. Louis grabs the lamp.

LOUIS

Stay back--- for the love of God...  
or I'll burn you alive...

Lestat lunges again at Claudia. Louis hurls the lamp, which explodes him in flame.

Lestat screams in agony, whirls around the room, then comes on Claudia again. She hurls another lamp. Louis throws the flaming sheets around him, wrapping him further in fire. Lestat falls to his knees, choking, hands up over his face in the smoke. The whole parlour is afire. Louis gathers up Claudia, smothering the burning house, carries her down the back stairs, through the carriage way and through the gathering crowds of mortals into the street.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Louis running, with Claudia in his arms. He looks back at the flames of the house. Sound of a ship's horn.

CLAUDIA

The ship is sailing without us!

LOUIS

Not yet.

Holding her tightly, Louis runs.

EXT. DECK OF SHIP - NEAR DAWN

Louis stands at the railings in the morning mist as the ship moves down the river. He sees...

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

With flame lighting up the sky.

LOUIS (V.O.)  
Though the fire seemed to spread  
through the quartier, I stood on  
that deck until dawn, fearful he  
would come out again of the very  
river like some monster to destroy  
us both. And all the while I thought,  
Lestat, we deserve your vengeance.  
You gave me the dark gift. And I  
delivered you into the hands of death  
for the second time.

INT. ROOM - SAN FRANCISCO

Louis and Malloy.

MALLOY  
Did he die in the fire?

LOUIS  
He was dead to us. We were free.  
That was all that mattered.

EXT. SHIP - EVENING

The ship, shrouded in mist.

LOUIS (V.O.)  
Though the ship was blessedly free  
of rats, a strange plague nonetheless  
struck its passengers.

A body is slipped into the sea. A priest reads last rites to  
a mourning family.

INT. SHIPS HOLD

Turnks and cases, creaking with the ship's movement. Dead  
rats everywhere.

LOUIS (V.O.)  
Claudia and I alone seemed imune. We  
kept to ourselves, pondering the  
mystery of Lestat and the greater  
mystery of each other.

EXT. SHIP - NIGHT

Passing through the Straits of Gibralter.

LOUIS (V.O.)

We reached the Mediterranean. I wanted those waters to be blue. They were black, nighttime waters and how I suffered then, straining to remember the colour that a young man's senses had taken for granted, that my memory had let slip away for eternity. It was black off the coast of Italy, black off the coast of Greece, Europe itself was black.

EXT. DECK - NIGHT

Claudia, sitting with an easel and sketch-pad, sketching the bay of Naples. A beautifully realised drawing, all in shades of grey and black. Louis observes.

CLAUDIA

Louis, your quest is for darkness only. This sea is not your sea. They myths of men are not your myths. Their history isn't yours.

The sketch changes to a sketch of -

THE ACROPOLIS --

In the moonlight.

LOUIS (V.O.)

We saw the Acropolis by moonlight, shades of grey and silver. And I longed for the brilliant white of those marbles in the hot sun of Homer...

The sketch changes to a sketch of --

TRANSYLVANIA --

And the traditional shapes of the vampire landscape.

LOUIS (V.O.)

We docked at Varna and searched the rural countryside of the Carpathians, for what she liked to term "our kind"...

a montage of sketches now - A TRANSYLVANIAN VILLAGE, A GRAVEYARD.

RUINED CASTLE AFTER CASTLE, LOOKING INTO THE SKIES...

LOUIS

The quest for these Old World vampires filled me with bitterness. We searched village after village, ruin after ruin and I was glad when always we found nothing. For what could the damned really have to say to the damned?

INT. ROOM - SAN FRANCISCO

Malloy and Louis.

MALLOY

You found nothing?

LOUIS

Peasant rumours, superstitions about garlic, crosses, stakes in the hear, all that - how do you say again? Bull shit. But one of our kind? Not a whisper.

MALLOY

No vampires in Transylvania? No Count Dracula?

LOUIS

Fictions, my friend. The vulgar fictions of a demented Irishman... So we repaired to Paris...

EXT. BOULEVARD FACADE OF GRAND HOTEL AND PARIS OPERA.

Crowds and gaslight everywhere. Carriages, horses, OPERA coming from the opera house.

LOUIS (V.O.)

I think the very name of Paris brought a rush of pleasure to me that was extraordinary. I was a Creole, after all and Paris was the mother of New Orleans, a universe whole and entire unto herself...

EXT. 18TH CENTURE PALACES ALONG THE SEINE - NIGHT

The high walls of the Louvre, dark figures walking in pairs through the shadowy tulieries.

EXT. STREET - SHOP WINDOW

Claudia, in furtrimmed muff and bonnet, peers through the glass at a display of dolls. Each doll in there seems to resemble her, with blonde hair and blue eyes. She peers deep into the shop and sees -

MADELEINE, a young woman bent over a workbench painting a doll's face, oblivious to being watched.

INT. OPERA STAIRCASE

Louis and Claudia hurrying hand in hand with a crowd of mortals towards the sound of an ORCHESTRA TURNING beyond.

INT. NOTRE DAME

Claudia and Louis standing in the deep shadows, looking at the branching arches. Louis is overcome with sadness, Claudia is fascinated.

INT. GALLERY

Louis and Claudia walk among a series of mythological nudes by Poussin.

INT. SALON - NIGHT

Claudia, surrounded by discarded dresses and outfits, being attended by couturiers. All the clothes are tiny, to fit her frame, but have an adult cut and shape.

LOUIS

We were alive again. We were in love  
and so euphoric was I that I yielded  
to her every desire...

INT. SUMPTUOUS HOTEL SUITE

Full of late 19th century furniture, lots of Empire style, Regency, gilt, velvet and brocade.

CLOSE ON A HUGE BLACK EBONY CHEST

Against a wall, solemn among all the light and glitter.

CLAUDIA

By a large gilt mirror, in her new clothes. She is covered with jewelry, fixing earrings to her ears.

CLAUDIA

Help me, mon chere...

Louis walks over, helps her with the earrings.

CLAUDIA  
How do I look?

LOUIS  
Still my beautiful child.

Claudia laughs.

CLAUDIA  
A beautiful child! Is that what you  
still think I am?

LOUIS  
Yes...

He turns away.

CLAUDIA  
Why do you turn away? Why don't you  
look.

She twirls, looking at herself in the mirror, then stops,  
stares at herself.

CLAUDIA  
You want me to be your daughter  
forever, don't you?

LOUIS  
Yes.

CLAUDIA  
Well tell me, papa. What was it like  
making love?

Louis is stunned. He blushes.

CLAUDIA  
You don't remember? Or you never  
knew.

LOUIS  
It was something hurried...and seldom  
savoured... something acute that was  
quickly lost. It was the pale shadow  
of killing.

CLAUDIA  
But how will I ever know, Louis?

She stares at him through the mirror.

CLAUDIA  
I'll never find them, will I? My own  
kind...

EXT. BOULEVARD - EVENING

Louis and Claudia walk along a boulevard like father and daughter. All around them are bourgeois Parisian families on their evening stroll. Claudia points at the children that pass.

CLAUDIA  
Have I anything in common with her,  
Louis?

She points to a beautiful French child walking by with her mother.

CLAUDIA  
Or her, or her - or any of them?

LOUIS  
Claudia, you torture yourself.

CLAUDIA  
They are ducklings, that will grow  
into swans. Whereas I must be the  
duckling forever.

LOUIS  
You are more beautiful than any of  
them.

EXT. DOLL-SHOP - NIGHT

We see Madeleine, inside, painting a doll's face. Louis and Claudia arrive outside.

CLAUDIA  
All her dolls resemble me.

POV --

Claudia's face, with the dolls in the background. The resemblance is uncanny.

CLAUDIA  
Are they my kind Louis? Dolls never  
change either.

LOUIS  
You are neither, Claudia. Now stop  
this --

Madeleine sees Claudia from inside. She waves.

LOUIS  
You know her?

CLAUDIA

Yes. Should I take her, Louis? Among  
her dolls? make a doll of her in  
turn?

LOUIS

Come, Claudia...

He takes her arm. But Claudia shakes him off, and moves into  
the shop.

EXT. LATIN QUARTER - NIGHT

Louis walks briskly, head bowed.

LOUIS (V.O.)

For a time we had been almost human,  
in the sensual whirl of whtt Paris  
had to offer. But the human delights  
of that city only served to remind  
her of the ageless child she had  
become. I felt her pain as I walked  
until I become aware that I was being  
followed.

CU LOUIS' FEET -

Walking. A step echoes his.

Louis stops. Turns, sees nothing. Then walks again. The  
echoing steps begin again.

Louis again. Sees a shadow, flitting.

LOUIS

Claudia!

Nothing. He walks again, hears the same effect. Then he stops.  
He stares at a gaslamp opposite.

LOUIS (V.O.)

So it was when I had given up the  
search for vampires that a vampire  
found me...

Santiago, a tall vampire, materialises under the gaslight.  
And Louis gradually realises that this vampire has assumed  
the same attitude, posture, clothes and hair-style as Louis.

Louis gives an involuntary shake of the head. Santiago mimics.  
Louis takes a step forwards. Santiago mimics. Louis folds  
his arms. Santiago mimics.



LOUIS AND SANTIAGO  
(simultaneously)  
Clever.

LOUIS  
You mean me harm?

SANTIAGO  
(a beat later)  
You mean me harm?

Louis calculates.

LOUIS  
Trickster. Buffoon!

Santiago echoes the first word, but not the second. Louis has broken his composure. He turns his back on Santiago, only to come face to face with Santiago right in front of him.

Again Louis turns this back to find Santiago facing him.

Louis turns, glowers, refusing to look at him.

LOUIS  
I've searched the world for an  
immortal and this is what I find?

Slowly he looks up. Santiago draws close, breaking the mirror trick and suddenly slams Louis back against the wall.

Louis is furious. He regains his balance, strikes out at Santiago and when Santiago vanishes, to reappear behind him, Louis slams back his elbow into his midriff. Santiago staggers, amazed and then rushes at Louis, throwing him down.

Louis rolls back to his feet, then to his amazement sees two vampires, one in front, one behind. He looks both ways, then sees one has vanished. He stares, awestruck, at this new one:

ARMAND

He looks like an angel.

ARMAND  
You are all right.

He reaches into his waistcoat, takes an engraved invitation out of his pocket and thrusts it at Louis.

Louis reads it aloud, as we see:

## THEATRE DES VAMPIRES

By Special Invitation Friday, 9 p.m.

ARMAND

Bring the petit beauty with you. No  
one will harm you. I won't allow it.  
Remember my name. Armand.

Armand bows and vanishes.

Louis listens to the silence.

EXT. BOULEVARD DES CAPUCHINES - THEATRE DES VAMPIRES - NIGHT

Louis formally dressed with Claudia in rich attire on his  
arm. They pass people buying tickets for the theatre and go  
inside.

LOUIS

Remember what I've told you. They'll  
have different powers. They'll read  
your thoughts if you allow it.

They draw close to:

HUGE POSTERS, reading --

THEATRE DES VAMPIRES PRESENTS THE MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH

By Edgar Allen Poe The posters are illustrated with cliched  
images of vampires overcoming damsels in distress.

ANOTHER ANGLE

CLAUDIA

But this can't be real. This is  
nonsense.

LOUIS

Nonsense all right. But something  
tell me it's going to be the strangest  
nonsense we've ever seen.

Warily, they show their invitations to the mortal ticket  
taker at the door. He glances away indifferently.

INT. THEATRE BOX - NIGHT

Claudia and Louis look at the crowd as the lights go down.

CLAUDIA

Mortals, mortals everywhere. And  
lots of drops to drink.

LOUIS  
 They are here. I know they are. Listen  
 for something that doesn't make a  
 sound.

Stage: curtain rises.

An elaborate painted set of an Italianate castle. Death  
 standing before it, the traditional image of the Grim Reaper,  
 complete with magnificent scythe.

LOUIS  
 (whisper)  
 It's a vampire. It's the one I saw  
 in Rue St. Jacques.

A version of the Poe story unfolds before them. All of the  
 participants are vampires. All beautiful gleaming white,  
 aged 20 or 30.

LOUIS  
 They use no paint. And the audience  
 think it is paint.

CLAUDIA  
 How devilishly clever.

A spotlight uncovers a mortal woman suddenly forced out upon  
 the stage.

CLAUDIA  
 She's no vampire.

LOUIS  
 No. She's frightened. She doesn't  
 know where she is.

The audience laughs uneasily, then stops as the Mortal Woman  
 comes into the footlights. She is too beautiful, too confused.  
 Santiago, as Death, advances on her. She backs away,  
 terrified, then sees the other vampires, in a phalanx,  
 advancing from behind, in a half-circle.

MORTAL WOMAN  
 I don't want to die!

She looks around in panic. Santiago swoons, arms over his  
 breast as if he is hopelessly in love.

SANTIAGO  
 We are death!

The Mortal Woman steps to the footlights.

MORTAL WOMAN

Someone help me. Please... What have I done?

Louis whispers to Claudia.

LOUIS

This is no performance.

CLAUDIA

And no one knows but us...

ON THE STAGE --

SANTIAGO

We all die. Death is the one thing you share with all those here.

Santiago gestures to the audience.

AUDIENCE.

Rapt faces.

ON STAGE

MORTAL WOMAN

But I'm young...

SANTIAGO

Death is no respecter of age. He can come any time, any place. Need I tell you what fate has in store for you?

MORTAL WOMAN

I would take my chance. Let me go! Please...

SANTIAGO

And if you take that chance and live, what is your fate? The humpbacked toothless visage of old age?

Santiago approaches her and tears the drawstring out of her peasant blouse. It opens completely and starts to slip. She tries to catch it, but gently stops her wrists. The blouse falls, exposing her young breasts.

LOUIS AND CLAUDIA

LOUIS

This is monstrous!

CLAUDIA  
Yes, and very beautiful.

ON STAGE

SANTIAGO  
Just as this flesh is pink now, it  
will turn grey and wrinkle with age.

WOMAN  
Let me live, please. I don't care.

SANTIAGO  
Then why should you care if you die  
now?

She shakes her head, confused. he catches her wrists behind  
her back.

AUDIENCE is awestruck by her beauty, her suffering.

SANTIAGO draws near her cheek.

SANTIAGO  
And suppose death had a heart to  
love and to release you? To whom  
would he turn his passion? Would you  
pick a person from the crowd there?  
A person to suffer as you suffer?

AUDIENCE  
A young girl cries out in jest.

YOUNG GIRL  
Oh, yes, take me Monsieur Vampire! I  
adore you!

Audience roars with laughter.

ONSTAGE

SANTIAGO  
You wait your turn.

The AUDIENCE laughs again.

The Mortal Woman shakes her head in panic.

SANTIAGO  
Well, have you a sister, a mother, a  
daughter you would send in your place?

CLOSE ON CLAUDIA

Even she is repelled by the cruelty. She shakes her head.

MORTAL WOMAN

Shakes her head. She is helpless.

SANTIAGO

We alone can give death meaning. Do  
you know what it means to be loved  
by death, to become our bride?

MORTAL WOMAN looks up on the verge of hysteria or fainting.  
But then her eyes mist over. She is being entranced.

FROM HER POV we realise she is looking past Santiago at the  
divinely beautiful Armand, who has just stepped out of the  
wings. Armand has entranced her. He passes Santiago. Santiago  
stiffens, but yields the stage.

ARMAND

No pain.

MORTAL WOMAN

No pain?

ARMAND takes her by the naked shoulders.

ARMAND

Your beauty is a gift to us.

ON STAGE

Armand gestures to the others who slowly, gracefully close  
in.

ARMAND

Who deserves such a gift?

He pulls the drawstring from her skirt and it falls revealing  
her nakedness. But she is spellbound.

MORTAL WOMAN

No pain...

Armand embraces her, drinks, her naked body stark against  
her black clothes, then he passes her to the other vampires  
one by one.

CLOSE ON LOUIS who battles desire and hunger with anger.

LOUIS

I've seen enough of this! I loathe  
it!

CLAUDIA

Be still!

## ON STAGE

The naked Mortal Woman lies dead on the floor. The vampires seem to vanish one by one. As the curtain draws across, the Audience loudly applauds what they presume are theatrical tricks.

## ANOTHER ANGLE

The audience, milling towards the exits. They talk in vacuous terms about the beauty of the show, the symbolism of it, the daring of it as they leave.

Gradually Louis and Claudia are left alone in the empty theatre. Louis seems anxious to leave. Claudia whispers in his ear.

CLAUDIA

Patience, Louis. Patience.

He looks around the empty theatre, more eery now than when the play was on. The red curtain shifts slightly in a hidden breeze, a candle sputters and dies in a box. Then the candle flares again, and we see Armand in the box, looking down on them. He stares with a dreamy expression, saying nothing.

LOUIS

We've been searching for you for a very long time...

His voice echoes eerily. Armand gestures for them to follow him.

## INT. FOOT OF STAIRWAY

Armand leading, Louis and Claudia following. It opens into a --

## HUGE UNDERGROUND BALLROOM

Walls are painted with famous copies of Durer, Brueghel, Goya and Bosch depictions of death. Fine wooden coffins line the walls. Candles burn in sconces, casting alternate shadows and pools of light. Armand walks through, gesturing Louis and Claudia to follow him.

As they walk through, vampire men and women appear out of the shadows like wraiths, startling them, drifting around them, stroking them, touching Claudia as if she were a doll. Shrieks of preternatural laughter.

Armand gestures to the vampires to back off.

All obey but ESTELLE.

ESTELLE

Such a darling.

She menaces Claudia, her breasts enormous, her fangs bared. Armand throw her a look, and she is flung against the wall.

Louis stares around. The vampires faces drift towards him and away, always disclosing the face of Armand, who seems some distance away, but strangely close, staring at Louis with a constantly calm, hypnotic gaze. Then a young mortal boy comes from the shadows with a candleabra, which he hands to Armand.

Armand and the boy come towards them, leading them along the walls, his candleabra illuminating the ghastly murals, his face gleaming like an angel above the candleflame.

LOUIS

Monstrous.

ARMAND

Yes, and very beautiful.

LOUIS

Your lips, they didn't move.

ARMAND

They did, but too fast for you to see them. No magic, just grace and speed.

The boy is watching Louis. Armand's hand beckons and the boy draws up to Louis in the candlelight. He places his arms on Louis' shoulders. Louis glances at Armand, who smiles. Louis sees the puncture marks on the boy's neck.

ARMAND

He wants you...

Louis is utterly confused. Can't resist. Drinks his blood.

The boy's body presses against him, sensual, willing. The other vampires appear all around Louis, who suddenly senses it and draws away, ashamed.

Claudia watches warily, from a distance. Armand beckons at her and Louis and open a door in the wall which reveals a stone staircase.

INT. MEDIEVAL ROOM

Medieval chairs, table, an old coffin, a bed in one corner, a blazing fire. A medieval painting of Satan, being banished from heaven, above the fire. Armand places the boy on the bed, settling him so he sleeps.



ARMAND

Disappointing, isn't it? To come so far and find so little. Jaded ingenues, amusing themselves with make-believe...

LOUIS

We had feared we were the only ones...

ARMAND

But how did you come into existence?

He glances at Louis, then at Claudia, who averts her eyes.

ARMAND

You don't want to answer... Two vampires from the new world, come to guide us into the new era as all we love slowly rots and fades away.

LOUIS

Are you the leader of this group?

ARMAND

If there were a leader, I would be the one.

Claudia stares at him constantly, guarded.

LOUIS

So you have the answers...

ARMAND

Ah! You have questions?

LOUIS

What are we?

ARMAND

Nothing if not vampires...

LOUIS

Who made us what we are?

ARMAND

Surely you know the one who made you...

LOUIS

But the one who made him, who made the one who made him, the source of all this evil...

Louis looks at the picture. Armand watches him.

ARMAND

That is a picture, nothing more.

LOUIS

You mean we are not children of Satan?

ARMAND

No.

He smiles at Louis. A smile of infinite compassion.

ARMAND

I understand. I saw you in the theatre, your suffering, your sympathy for that girl. I saw you with the boy. You die when you kill, you feel you deserve to die and you stint on nothing. But does that make you evil? Or, since you comprehend what you call goodness, does it not make you good?

LOUIS

Then there is nothing.

ARMAND

Perhaps...

He passes his finger through the candle flame.

ARMAND

And perhaps this is the only real evil left...

LOUIS

Then God does not exist...

ARMAND

I have not spoken to him...

LOUIS

And no vampire here has discourse with God or the Devil?

ARMAND

None that I've ever known. I know nothing of God or the Devil, I have never seen a vision nor learnt a secret that would damn or save my soul. And as far as I know, after four hundred years I am the oldest living vampire in the world.

He stares at them, his face angelic, hypnotic, young. His eyes hold them both in a trance.

LOUIS

My God... So it's as I always feared.  
Nothing, leading to nothing.

ARMAND

You fell too much. So much you make  
me feel...

He stares from Claudia to Louis. He seems to be reading their  
souls.

ARMAND

The one who made you should have  
told you this. The one who left the  
old world for the new...

LOUIS

He knew nothing. He just didn't care.

ARMAND

Knew? You mean he is...

Claudia appears suddenly to Louis' shoulder, interrupting.

CLAUDIA

Come, beloved. It's time we were on  
our way. I'm hungry and the city  
waits.

She stares hard at Armand. Armand looks from her to Louis.

ARMAND

So soon to go?

He seems genuinely regretful. But Claudia pulls Louis out.

INT. DARKENED CORRIDORS AND THEATRE - NIGHT

Louis and Claudia feel their way through darkened corridors,  
trying to find their way out.

LOUIS (V.O.)

The place was dark as we left, a  
darkness that confounded even Claudia.  
And as we blundered through it, again  
came the thought: I have wronged  
Lestat, I have hated him for th wrong  
reasons.

Suddenly a light comes on. They see they are in the empty  
theatre. Santiago stands on the stage, under a candle.

SANTIAGO

How did you wrong him?

Louis is stunned.

LOUIS  
You read my thoughts?

SANTIAGO  
You said a name -

LOUIS  
A name I don't want to say again.

SANTIAGO  
I seemed to recognize it...

Other vampires appear behind him.

SANTIAGO  
There is but one crime among us  
vampires here.

He looks at Claudia.

SANTIAGO  
You should know, who are so secretive  
about the vampire who made you.

Claudia laughs.

CLAUDIA  
Boredom!

SANTIAGO  
It is the crime that means death to  
any vampire. To kill your own kind!

CLAUDIA  
Aaaah! I was so afraid it was to be  
born like Venus out of the foam, as  
we were! Come Louis, let's go!

EXT. HOTEL SAINT GABRIEL - NIGHT

Claudia and Louis enter the Lobby.

CLAUDIA  
I lothe them! I can't stand the sight  
of them! Stupid bourgeois Parisians,  
all dressed in black like some private  
club! I've searched for them the  
world over and I despise them!

LOUIS  
What danger?

CLAUDIA  
I can feel it from them! They want  
to know who made us, what became of  
him. They have their rules, their  
idiotic rules!

They come to their room, enter.

INT. HOTEL ROOMS - NIGHT

Louis closes the door behind him. Claudia paces.

LOUIS  
Do you think I would let them harm  
you?

CLAUDIA  
No, you would not, Louis. Danger  
hold you to me.

LOUIS  
Love holds you to me. And we are in  
danger, not you.

CLAUDIA  
Love?

She smiles at him. A strange, sad, adult smile.

CLAUDIA  
You would leave me for Armand if he  
beckoned you.

LOUIS  
Never.

CLAUDIA  
He wants you as you want him. He's  
been waiting for you. He wants you  
for a companion. He bides his time  
that place. He finds them as dull  
and lifeless as we do.

LOUIS  
That's not so.

CLAUDIA  
Do you know what his soul said to me  
without saying a word? When he put  
me in that trance...

LOUIS  
So you felt it too!

CLAUDIA

Let him go, he said. Let him go.

She touches his face.

CLAUDIA

Is that what I should do Louis? Let  
you go? My father? My lover? My Louis,  
who made me?

There are tears in her eyes. Louis lifts her up in his arms.

LOUIS

He can protect us, Claudia.

CLAUDIA

You really believe that?

EXT. DOLL-SHIP - NIGHT

Claudia, staring at the dolls. We see Madeleine inside,  
painting a doll. She sees Claudia and smiles and waves.

INT. THEATRE - NIGHT

Louis, sitting alone in the box, as the curtains draw back,  
to show Santiago as death, as before. Louis takes advantage  
of the darkness to slip away.

INT. ARMAND'S ROOM - NIGHT

Armand opens the door to Louis' knock.

ARMAND

I was waiting for you...

LOUIS

Listen to me.

He follows Armand into the room.

LOUIS

Claudia is dear to me. My... daughter.

ARMAND

Your lover.

LOUIS

No, my beloved, my child.

ARMAND

If you say so. You are innocent.

LOUIS

I'm not innocent. But I'm afraid.  
She feels she's in danger from the  
others.

ARMAND

She is.

LOUIS

But why?

ARMAND

I could give you reasons. Her silence.  
Her youth. It's forbidden to make so  
young, so helpless, that cannot  
survive on its own.

LOUIS

Then blame the one who made her...

ARMAND

Did you kill this vampire who made  
you both? Is that why you won't say  
his name? Santiago thinks you did.

LOUIS

We want no quarrel with him.

ARMAND

It's already begun. If you want to  
save her, send her away.

LOUIS

Then I leave too.

Armand smiles.

ARMAND

So soon? Without any of those answers  
you so longed for?

LOUIS

You said there were none.

ARMAND

But you asked the wrong questions.  
Do you know how few vampires have  
the stamina for immortality? How  
quickly they perish of their own  
will.

LOUIS

We can do that?

ARMAND

You would never give up life. If the world were reduced to one empty cell, on fragile candle, you stay alive and study it. You see too clearly. You see too much.

LOUIS

That's what the one who made me said.

ARMAND

How he must have loved you.

Armand suddenly grips Louis close to him.

ARMAND

Louis, I need you more than he ever did. I need a link with this century. The world changes. We do not. Therein lies the irony that ultimately kills us. I need you to make contact with this age.

Louis laughs bitterly.

LOUIS

He? Don't you see? I'm not the spirit of any age! I'm at odds with everything and always have been! I'm not even sure what I am!

Armand smiles.

ARMAND

But Louis, that is the very spirit of your age. The heart of it. You fall from grace has been the fall of a century.

Louis is stunned.

LOUIS

And the vampires of the Theatre?

ARMAND

Like moths around the candle of the age. Decadent, useless. They can't reflect anything. But you do. You reflect its broken heart.

Louis is speechless.

ARMAND

Are these not the answers you came for?



LOUIS  
(softly)  
Yes... My God...

ARMAND  
A vampire with a human soul. An  
immortal with a mortal's passion.  
You are beautiful, my friend. Lestat  
must have wept when he made you --

LOUIS  
Lestat! You knew Lestat!

ARMAND  
Yes I knew him. Knew him well enough  
not to mourn his passing.

Armand stands. He takes Louis by the arm, leads him towards  
the back wall.

ARMAND  
But you must go now. You must get  
her safely out of Paris.

He opens a hidden door in the wall.

ARMAND  
No one else knows of this door. When  
you knock you will find me waiting...

EXT. THEATRE DES VAMPIRES - NIGHT

Louis, in the street outside, as the door closes behind him.

LOUIS (V.O.)  
I felt a kind of peace at last. I  
had found the teacher which Lestat  
could never, I knew now, have been.  
I knew knowledge would never be  
withheld by Armand. It would pass  
through him as through a pane of  
glass. And I knew Claudia must leave  
me...

INT. HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Louis enters. There is unfamiliar scent in the air, a doll  
sitting by the mirror. Louis looks in the mirror and sees --

MADELEINE, the doll-maker, resplendent in green taffeta,  
sitting like a Madonna with Claudia on her lap. Claudia's  
arms are wound round her neck. The contrast between mortal  
woman and immortal child is plain.

CLAUDIA

Madeleine... Louis is shy.

Madeleine rises and comes towards Louis. She draws back the lace fringes round her throat, so he can see the two marks there. She says softly, dreamily.

MADELEINE

Drink.

Louis turns away. Claudia speaks, icy, from the bed.

CLAUDIA

Do it Louis. Because I cannot do it.  
I haven't the strength. You saw to  
that when you made me.

Louis turns to Madeleine.

LOUIS

You haven't the vaguest conception  
under God of what you ask!

MADELEINE

Au contraire, monsieur, I have.

Louis pushes her away. Claudia screams.

CLAUDIA

You have found your new companion,  
Louis! You will make me mine!

Louis grips Madeleine and shakes her.

LOUIS

How do we seem to you? Do you think  
us beautiful, magical, our white  
skin, our fierce eyes? Drink, you  
ask me! Have you any idea of the  
thing you will become?

CLAUDIA

Your evil is that you cannot be evil!  
And I will suffer for it no longer!

LOUIS

Don't make me, Claudia! I cannot do  
it!

CLAUDIA

Yet you could do it to me! Snatching  
me from my mother's hands like two  
monsters in a fairy-tale! Couldn't  
you have waited? Six more years and  
I would have had that shape!

CLAUDIA

And now you weep! You haven't tears  
enough for what you've done to me.

She points to Madeleine.

CLAUDIA

You give her to me! Do this before  
you leave me!

She begins to weep, sobbing like a child.

CLAUDIA

Oh God! I love you still, that's the  
torment of it. But you know I must  
leave you Louis...

LOUIS

Yes...

CLAUDIA

And who will care for me my love, my  
dark angel, when you are gone?

Louis looks at Madeleine.

LOUIS

You promise to care for her then?

MADELEINE

Yes...

LOUIS

And you know what you ask for?

She wraps her arms around Claudia.

MADELEINE

Yes.

LOUIS

What do you think she is, Madeleine?  
A doll?

MADELEINE

A child who can't die...

Her finger clutches a locket around her neck, Louis touches  
it, opens it.

THE LOCKET --

A picture of a young girl, Claudia's age, wistful, beautiful.

LOUIS  
And the child who did die?

MADELEINE  
My daughter...

Louis takes her chin in his hand, gently.

LOUIS  
Look at the gaslight. Don't tke your  
eyes off it. You will be drained to  
the point of death, but you must  
stay alive. Do you hear me?

MADELEINE  
Yes!

Louis pulls her to him and starts to drink her blood.

EXT. HOTEL BALCONY - LATER

Louis on the balcony, weakened terribly. A breeze blows on  
the gauze curtains behind him, through which we see --

SILHOUETTES of Madeleine and Claudia. Madeleine her arms  
outstretched, now a vampire, a long moan of pain coming from  
her. Claudia comes through the curtains, alarmed.

CLAUDIA  
(whisper)  
Louis!

Louis speaks without turning.

LOUIS  
She is dying. It happened to you  
too, but your child's mind can't  
remember.

CLAUDIA  
But if she dies...

LOUIS  
It's only mortal death.

He turns to look at Claudia.

LOUIS  
Bear me no ill will, my love. We are  
now even.

CLAUDIA  
What do you mean?

LOUIS

What died tonight inside that room  
was not that woman. It will take her  
many nights to die, perhaps yeaars.  
What has died in that room tonight  
is the last vestige in me of what  
was human.

She takes his hand.

CLAUDIA

Yes father. At last. We are een.

He bends down and kisses her. He looks up, at the wafting  
curtains. he sees --

MANY VAMPIRE SHADOWS

Silhouetted, coming closer.

CLAUDIA

Looks up and screams.

THE CURTAINS

Are ripped aside. The vampires of the Theatre surge through.

ESTELLE

Time for justice, little one.

The vampires close on them as Louis struggles, Claudia's  
scream pierces the night air.

INT. CORRIDOR OF THEATRE DES VAMPIRES - NIGHT

In a press of vampires, Louis, Claudia and Madeleine are  
forced down the dark corridor. Into -

THE BALLROOM

Vampire chaos, as they are dragged through. Louis struggling  
like a demon.

LOUIS

Armand! Get me Armand! he wouldn't  
countenance this -

SANTIAGO

You can make no demands here! Buffoon!  
Bastard -

Santiago strikes Louis to the ground. As he struggles to his  
feet, he sees the vampires part around a figure coming  
through. He gasps at the sight of --

LESTAT

Dressed beautifully, but horribly scarred now, from the fire as well as the earlier stabbing. Lestat is confused, ancient, teetering, reaching for Santiago's shoulder to steady himself.

LESTAT

Louis...

SANTIAGO

Is he the one?

Lestat shakes his head.

LESTAT

No, the child. The child was the one...

SANTIAGO

All the murderers!!!

LOUIS

You are alive, Lestat! It can't be murder! Tell them how you treated us...

Lestat reaches out to Louis.

LESTAT

No... you come back to me Louis...

LOUIS

Are you mad????

ESTELLE

The sentence is death! To all of them!!!

LESTAT

Only the girl - it was the girl -

The sound of something being dragged through the crowd.  
Horrible echoing, scraping -

Lestat grips Santiago.

LESTAT

You promised me - I could take him  
back to New Orleans - Louis - there's  
something I must tell you - about  
that night - that night I met you -

He stares around him, confused. The scraping gets louder.

LOUIS

You let her go, Lestat - you let her  
free - and I'll come back with you -

Santiago grabs Louis by the neck.

SANTIAGO

Death for the others. For you eternity  
in a box -

We see now what caused the scraping. A huge metal coffin  
being dragged through the vampires. Claudia screams.

SANTIAGO

Walled in a dungeon. Your only company  
will be your screams... Perhaps it  
will take centuries...

The vampires grab Louis. They force him towards the coffin.  
Lestat struggles with them.

LESTAT

He's coming home with me - you  
promised -

SANTIAGO

(laughing)  
We promised nothing!

Louis struggles fiercely as he is forced into the coffin.  
Claudia weeps.

LOUIS

They've fooled you, Lestat! You must  
reach Armand! Armand has the power!

Louis, struggling in the coffin. Then the lid is forced down,  
huge locks closed over it.

INT. COFFIN

Louis, in the smallest imaginable space. Beating his forehead  
against the metal.

EXT. COFFIN

Claudia, throwing herself on the coffin, crying. She is  
dragged away. Vampire hands drag the coffin across the stone  
floor.

INT. COFFIN

Louis, forehead pouring with blood, being thrown this way  
and that. The coffin is lifted, upside down, Louis' head  
crashes off the floor.

EXT. COFFIN

Is thrust into a niche in the wall. Bricks being placed over, mortar trowelled on.

INT. COFFIN

Louis upside down. Sounds of bricks and mortar. Then terrifying, unearthly scream pierces the coffin, striking to his very soul.

                                LOUIS  
                Claudia!!!!

He loses consciousness.

BLACKNESS.

INT. COFFIN

Louis sleeps, upside down. Sound of bricks being broken, thrown aside. Then of locks breaking.

Louis opens his eyes. The lid opens. He sees -

ARMAND

Above him, reaching down to take his hand.

                                ARMAND  
                Hurry. Don't make a sound.

Louis gets out, into a vast long catacomb. Louis runs to the end of it, steps through a broken brick wall.

                                LOUIS  
                Where is she? Where's Claudia?

                                ARMAND  
                Follow me - that way - through my  
                cell -

He points to his cell at the end of the passage, the foot of the steps. Sound of rain beyond the door.

                                LOUIS  
                Not without Claudia. Where is she?

                                ARMAND  
                I can't save her.

                                LOUIS  
                You can't believe I'd leave without  
                her. Armand! You must save her! You  
                have no choice.



ARMAND

Louis, I can't save her. I will only  
risk losing you -

Louis runs up the stone stairs. It leads to the ballroom. He enters.

Estelle stands far off, looking at him coolly. She lifts the stage skull mask and laughs softly behind it. A male vampire slumps in a chair staring softly at Louis.

Silence. Indifference.

Louis sees Lestat sitting in a far corner. he rushes up to Lestat, who looks up at him, confused. He's holding something crumpled, made of cloth.

LESTAT

You'll come home with me Louis? For  
a little while... until I am myself  
again.

LOUIS

CLAUDIA!!!

Louis turns round and round in rage. Passive still faces. A door bangs open and shut.

Louis looks again at Lestat. He snatches the cloth from Lestat's hand. We see it is a small torn bloodstained dress. Claudia's dress.

The door bangs again. Estelle laughs. Rain gusts into the ballroom.

Louis goes to the door, holding the dress. Armand approaches, trying to pull him away, but Louis shrugs him off. He draws nearer and nearer and stairs at --

INT. BRICK AIRWELL

On the stones lie Claudia and Madeleine, burn to ashes, in each other's arms, like the corpses of his wife and daughter in the New Orleans graveyard, embracing each other.

Only Claudia's blond hair and Madeleine's red hair remain unburnt.

Louis looks up at the walls of this airwell, many stories to the sky. He cries out in agony.

Santiago appears behind him, staring. Louis roars in horror and attacks Santiago, scattering the ashes into the rainy wind. Claudia's golden locks fly up into the wind, they whirl around the warring figure.

Armand appears, drags Louis free, pulls him screaming from the airwell, into the ballroom, towards the exit.

Claudia's hair is sucked up by the wind through the airwell, towards the night sky.

EXT. NOTRE DAME DOOR - NIGHT

Louis is slumped against the stone wall. Armand stands beside him like a guardian angel.

ARMAND  
I couldn't prevent it.

LOUIS  
I don't believe you. I do not have  
to read your soul to know that you  
lie.

ARMAND  
Louis, they cannot be brought back.  
There are some things that are  
impossible, even for me.

LOUIS  
You let them do it.

Louis climbs to his feet.

LOUIS  
You held sway over them. They feared  
you. You wanted it to happen.

ARMAND  
Louis, I swear I did not.

LOUIS  
I understand you only too well. You  
let them do it, as I let Lestat turn  
a child into a demon. As I let her  
rip Lestat's heart to pieces! Well I  
am no longer that passive fool that  
has spun evil from evil till the web  
traps the one who made it. Your  
melancholy spirit of this century! I  
know what I must do. And I warn you -  
you saved me tonight, so I return  
the favour - do not go near your  
cell in the Theatre Des Vampires  
again.

EXT. THEATRE DES VAMPIRES - DAWN

Wet and deserted, the streets around the theatre are quiet.

C/U CLOCK

Chiming five a.m.

CLOSE ON LOUIS

Lookin at the paling sky. He is in an alleyway, outside of Armand's cell. He has a huge keg with him. he finds the door unlocked. He enters.

INT. CELL

Empty. The hearth is cold. The old coffin is gone. Louis silently closes the door to the passage and blocks it with an immense bar. He goes in the other door.

INT. THEATRE

Louis hurls kerosene all over the stage, the curtain, the sets, the seats below. He grabs the scythe from the playlet. He walks out. Dribbling a trail of kerosene behind him.

INT. STAIRS

Louis walking rapidly down, leaving the trail of kerosene. He creeps quietly into the --

BALLROOM

Leaking kerosene from the cask. He splashes over the coffins that gleam in the dimness.

Then he strikes a match and heaves it into the kerosene. Everything bursts into flame. The trail of kerosene roars into fire through the ballroom over the coffins and up the stairs. We hear EXPLOSIONS of fire from above.

LOUIS

Shudders all over, fighting the morning weakness. He readies the scythe, like the grim reaper.

ESTELLE rises from her burning coffin, screams and tries to run through the fire but Louis slashes her down with the scythe and she goes down screaming, her dress in flames.

ESTELLE

Stop him. It's morning. The sunlight.  
Stop him.

Others rise, choking in the smoke. Screams from everywhere. They are burning.

Louis backs up the stairs to the --

## DUNGEON

He can see there a thin pale light under Armand's bolted door. Suddenly --

## SANTIAGO

Comes at him from behind. Louis turns. Santiago rushes him in a blur. Louis swings the scythe, too fast to see what he himself is doing. Santiago's head streaming blood flies through the air.

The body drops, flapping its arms.

SCREAMS come from everywhere.

Another vampire rushes burning towards Louis. He decapitates him in turn. Then he staggers into Armand's cell, and bars the door the connects it to the ballroom behind him. He staggers to the outer door. There is a thin strip of daylight, beneath the door, blinding him. He throws it open, and staggers into the daylight.

## EXT. THEATRE DES VAMPIRES - DAWN

Louis staggers out of the burning theatre, into the thin daylight. Great gusts of smoke cover the street. He staggers through the daylight, weakening, about to fall, when through the clouds of smoke comes -

## MAGNIFICENT HEARSE -

As in a dream, driven by Armand's human boy. The door of the hearse opens. Through the curtains enclosing the interior, we see Armand. He reaches a hand out to Louis and pulls him inside.

The hearse vanishes through the smoke, leaving the spectacle of the burning theatre.

## EXT. THEATRE DES VAMPIRES - TWILIGHT

The gutted Theatre and ballroom, the roof collapsed, exposed to the evening sky. The life of Paris goes on around it, oblivious.

## INT. LOUVER - NIGHTS LATER

It is already a museum by this time and Louis and Armand, fancily dressed and composed, walk through it. They stop by a Gericault - The Wreck of the Medusa.

## LOUIS

You didn't even warm them, did you?

ARMAND

No.

LOUIS

And yet you knew what I would o.

ARMAND

I knew. I rescued you, didn't I?  
From the terrible dawn.

LOUIS

You were their leader. They trusted  
you.

ARMAND

You made me see their failings, Louis.  
You made me look at them with your  
eyes.

He looks at Louis affectionately.

ARMAND

Your melancholy eyes...

LOUIS

What a pair we are. We deserve each  
other, don't we?

ARMAND

We are a pair, and that's what counts.

Armand and Louis walk slowly through the Louvre together.  
Camera follows them for a while, then comes to rest on a  
sunrise by Turner.

LOUIS (V.O.)

We left Paris shortly after. For  
years we wandered. Greece, Egypt,  
all the ancient lands. Then, out of  
curiosity, perhaps, boredom, who  
knows what, I took him home, to my  
America...

INT. MOVIE THEATRE - NIGHT

A deco cinema of the twenties. Louis and Armand, dressed in  
the style of the period walk down the aisle through the  
crowded seats.

LOUIS (V.O.)

And there, a technological wonder  
allowed me see sunrise, for the first  
time in two hundred years...

On the screen, Murnau's SUNRISE, in black and white. We see a montage of sunrises, from a whole range of movies, in black and white.

LOUIS (V.O.)

And what sunrises! Seen as the human eye could never see them. We would sit in the dark, night after night among nameless humans, entranced with the miracle of light. Silver at first, then as the years progressed in tones of purple, red and my long-lost blue...

The SUNRISES continue, in colour now, and the backgrounds in them change to the fifties.

LOUIS (V.O.)

And in time parted. We had become so alike, we both wanted the certainties of loneliness once more.

The lights come up in a different theatre. Louis sitting there, alone, in a half empty theatre, dressed in the clothes of the fifties. He rises, exits with the others.

EXT. NEW ORLEANS STREET - NIGHT

Cars rushing by, twentieth-century madness. Louis emerges from the theatre, walks through the streets.

LOUIS (V.O.)

I had returned to new Orleans. As soon as I smelt the air, I knew I was home. There was sadness there, rich, almost sweet, like the fragrance of jasmine. I walked the streets, savouring it like a long lost perfume...

EXT. GARDEN DISTRICT - NIGHT

Louis walks past the many Greek Revival Mansions.

LOUIS (V.O.)

And then on Prytania Street, only blocks from the Lafayette cemetery I caught the scent of death and it wasn't coming from the graves...

CAMERA PANS OVER white-walled Lafayette cemetery and its surrounding mansions.

LOUIS (V.O.)

The scent grew stronger as I walked.  
Old death. A scent too faint for  
mortals to detect.

Louis sees rats darting across the street. They rush into a great overgrown garden surrounding a ruined mansion. No lights.

Louis stops at a rusted gate. He forces it open and enters --

A VERITABLE JUNGLE of overgrown rose and oak tree and wisteria. he sees a faint glimmer of light coming from a distant glass window of a huge Greek Revival house. He approaches then he sees --

OLD SHRIVELLED CORPSE of a man, long dead and dried up, snagged in the thorny rosevines.

LOUIS looks around. Walks on. Sees another corpse, almost nothing but bones, sinking into the wet earth, the roots of an oak overgrowing it.

He looks up at the distant light.

He passes a third corpse, caught in wisteria and rose vine, only bones and clothes.

LOUIS (V.O.)

They were like the doomed princess  
caught in the thorny vines of Sleeping  
Beauty's castle. I knew what it meant.  
A vampire had lured them here, but  
had benn to weak to get rid of them.

Louis sees dead rats lying near the steps.

LOUIS (V.O.)

It spelt weakness, madness, the  
behavior of a dying animal that  
pollutes its own lair.

Louis treads carefully on the rotted steps. he moves along the porch. More dead rats. He sees through the floor-length window into rooms lined with stacked books. Virtually walled with them. Water seeps down from the ceiling, gleaming as it streaks over the books. The floors of the splendid rooms are bare, except for a rotten French chair by a dead fireplace. A single mirror reflecting the moon.

Dead rats.

He moves along the porch to the parlour windows. The candle flickers inside. He sees --

HIS POV

Lestat lying on the floor. He is gaunt to near starvation. All his scars are gone, but he is almost a skeleton and his eyes are enormous in their sockets. His clothes are rags. Blond hair beautiful, as always.

MALLOY'S ENTRANCES FACE SUPERIMPOSED OVER.

MALLOY (V.O.)

Lestat escaped the fire!

LOUIS (V.O.)

He hadn't even been there. And all those years I thought he was dead.

BACK TO --

Lestat. One tiny candle stands beside him. He reads an early comic, from the turn of the century. Without turning his head, he speaks.

LESTAT

I'm so glad you're here Louis...  
I've dreamed of your coming...

LOUIS

Don't try to speak... it's alright...

LESTAT

I didn't mean to let them do it...  
that Santiago, he tricked me...

LOUIS

That's all past, Lestat.

LESTAT

Yes. Past... she should never have  
been one of us...

He turns and looks at Louis. Old, fearful, broken.

LESTAT

Still beautiful Louis. You always  
were the strong one.

LOUIS

Don't fear me, Lestat. I bring you  
no harm.

LESTAT

You've come back to me, Louis? You've  
come again to me?



Louis shakes his head. A series of police sirens go by, piercing the night sky. A helicopter goes overhead. Red flashes illuminate his face. Lestat shivers, covers his ears. He's terrified. Louis touches him, calming him, until the lights pass over.

LOUIS  
It's only a siren...

LESTAT  
I can't bear it Louis! The machines out there, that fly and that roar! And such lights! They make the night brighter than the day!

LOUIS  
And they frighten you?

LESTAT  
You know I love the dark. But there's no dark anymore.

LOUIS  
It's false light, Lestat. It can't harm you...

LESTAT  
If you stayed with me Louis, I could venture out... little by little... become the old Lestat.

Louis shivers. He releases him.

LOUIS  
I have to go now Lestat...

LESTAT  
You remember how I was, Louis.. the vampire Lestat...

LOUIS  
Yes. I remember...

Lestat shivers.

LESTAT  
I tried to tell you Louis... that night in Paris... when I first came to you... no-one can refuse the dark gift, Louis... not even you.

LOUIS  
I tried...

LESTAT

And the more you tried, the more I  
wanted you... a vampire with your  
beautiful, suffering human heart.  
And how you suffered... I need your  
forgiveness, Louis.

LOUIS

You have it...

Louis walks slowly away from him. Lestat turns back to his  
candle, his magazine.

LESTAT

You'll come back, Louis... take me  
out... little by little... and maybe  
I'll be myself again...

A bluebottle buzzes by him. His hand shoots out and grabs  
it, squeezes the blood.

LOUIS

(whispering)

Yes, Lestat...

ON LOUIS as he walks through the decayed house. His eyes are  
expressionless.

LOUIS (V.O.)

And my story ends there. But in fact  
it ended a long time ago, with  
Claudia's ashes in that theatre. My  
love died with her. I never really  
changed after that. What became of  
Lestat I have no idea. I go on, night  
after night. I feed on those who  
cross my path. But all my passion  
went with her yellow hair. I'm a  
spirit with perternatural flesh.  
Detached. unchangeable. Empty.

INT. ROOM - SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT (PRESENT)

Malloy, staring at Louis.

MALLOY

No... it can't end like that...

LOUIS

But it has. There is no more to tell.

MALLOY

But you talk about passion, about  
longing, about things I'll never  
know in my life!

MALLOY

It's still inside you, in every syllable you speak! And then you tell me it ends like that? Just empty?

LOUIS

It's over, I'm telling you...

MALLOY

You need a new passion, Louis, a new reason to feel... what a story you've told, you don't understand yourself.

Louis looks at the cassettes on the table.

LOUIS

Do what you want with it. Learn what you can. Give the story to others.

Malloy rises.

MALLOY

You have another chance, Louis. Take me! Give me your gift, your power...

Louis is slowly horrified, then outraged and angry.

LOUIS

Is this what you want? You ask me for this after all I've told you?

MALLOY

If I could see what you've seen, feel what you've felt I wouldn't let it end like this! You need a like to the world out there, a connection... then it won't end like this...

He stares at Louis.

MALLOY

You need me.

Louis turns away.

LOUIS

Dear God. I've failed again, haven't I?

MALLOY

No...

LOUIS

Don't say anymore. The reels are still turning. I have but one chance

LOUIS  
to show you the meaning of what I've  
said.

He looks at the boy. Then suddenly grabs him, lifts him off the floor, bares his terrifying fangs and brings them to his throat. Malloy screams, in involuntary terror.

LOUIS  
You like it? You like being food for  
the immortals? You like dying? Is it  
beautiful? Is it intense?

Malloy, now terrified, whispers

MALLOY  
No... please...

Louis drops him.

LOUIS  
Thank God.

Malloy, falls on the floor, terrified. When he looks up, Louis has vanished.

MALLOY  
Louis... Louis...

He looks up at the tape. It is still turning.

MALLOY  
Holy shit...

He shakes his head. He gets up, and with shaking fingers gathers his tapes. He runs out of the room.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE - NIGHT

Malloy running for his car, a convertible. He leaps in and screeches off through the night.

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

Malloy whips the car through the tiny streets, in sheer, unfocused terror.

MALLOY  
Jesus...

EXT. GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE - NIGHT

Malloy driving with streams of traffic over the bridge. He breathes deeply, to calm himself. He takes a tape from his pocket, and with still shaking hands, sticks it in the deck.

LOUIS (V.O.)

(tape)

1791. That's when it happened. I was  
twenty-four. Younger then you are  
now.

Suddenly a bony hand shoots out from the back seat, pulls  
his neck backwards --

LESTAT sinks his teeth in his neck.

MALLOY'S hands on the wheel shaking, shuddering, losing their  
grip.

MALLOY'S eyes bulging, as the life drains out of him. Lestat  
sucking him like a rat.

THE WHEEL swinging free of Malloy's dying hands.

THE CAR veers wildly into oncoming traffic.

LESTAT drinks regardless A TRUCK coming towards them, about  
to crush the car.

LESTAT'S BONY HAND grabs the wheel, jerks it as he drinks.

THE CAR misses the truck by inches.

LESTAT throws Malloy to one side, climbs into the front seat.

THE TAPE PLAYING

LOUIS (V.O.)

(tape)

My invitation was open to anyone.  
Sailors, whores, thieves. But it was  
a vampire that accepted...

ON LESTAT at the wheel, the corpse of Malloy in the passenger  
seat. He smiles. We can see the blood renewing him.

LESTAT

Dear Louis... will I ever forget?

EXT. GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE - NIGHT

Lestat drives on, the car a tiny speck against the bridge,  
the sea, the sky beyond, with the first fingers of light  
spreading through it.

THE END