

Marie Laveau and the Vampire

by Rosary O'Neill

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Time

June 15, 1881, at four a.m., the death hour of Marie Laveau in New Orleans Louisiana.

Setting

An occult parlor, in the French Quarter and other places where the arts of black magic and voodoo are practiced in New Orleans. We're in the death mind of the Voodoo Priestess, Marie Laveau II, a legendary healer still celebrated today in New Orleans.

Characters

Marie Laveau - Créole Voodoo Priestess of stunning beauty, she seems in her 20s but is actually must older.

L'Esprit - an elegant Creole man, fashionable dressed in full evening vampire attire, scarf, cape.

Fantôme - a thin Créole woman, glacial appearance.

Annie - a charming Creole girl, about seventeen. Doll-like but blind, she walks with a stick.

NOTE: The coffin and other death symbols can be real or imaginary.

Prologue: L'ESPRIT

(Music playing softly)

L'ESPRIT

(Confused, enraged) Who am I? Some say I'm an evil spirit. Others that I'm actually part of God. You see I'm dead but I'm still a thinking being. The me of me exists forever. When you grasp that, it's an enormous weight. Periodically, I need to go down and extinguish other entities, other beings, because it's through them that I'm supposed to learn. *(Fearful)* Recently, I got assigned to Marie Laveau. I knew exactly who she was—a infamous priestess in 19th century New Orleans, but it also struck me that...she might help me understand my own half/life. *(Regretful)* So I agreed to "midwife" her passing... Timelessness takes over in the after life. *(Resistant)* It all happens very fast like going by a town on a train. But as I spotted earth the veil of forgetfulness fell away. *(Sad, longing)* I could see down into the French Quarter that Marie lived in. Mostly I saw the Mississippi, the oak trees, Jackson Square, St. Louis Cathedral, and her Creole cottage on St. Anne. *(Astonished)* I could focus on any spot and I could see down into it and expand it. Her double parlor with the remnants of grandeur, an altar with candles, floor-to-ceiling windows, a shuttered gallery. *(Delighted, nostalgic)* They looked the way they look from the air when you are flying over. It was June. I

could see leaves and green and all that.
(Angry, accusatory) Everyone thinks of
themselves as having been thrust into death
and then these things happen to them but
nothing happens to you. You cause
everything.

Scene One: The Casket

AT RISE: MARIE LAVEAU—a timeless
Creole beauty stands
near a casket. She wears
a rose satin shroud and
velvet hair ribbons.

L'ESPRIT in a black suit
with starched white color
stands apart in the
shadow. He reads his
lines from a red
book.

MARIE

(Hysterical, desperate) Who put me in that
casket? I'm alive.

L'ESPRIT

(Mean, Scary) You couldn't sleep.

MARIE

Probably took the wrong potion.

L'ESPRIT

You're a Voodoo Queen, can't do things
without drama.

MARIE

Things went from it's good to

L'ESPRIT

Omygod what's happening here, to—

MARIE

My body looks like it's in that coffin
propped up on those pillows. But I'm here.

L'ESPRIT

(Laughing) Somebody must have put a spell on
you.

(She checks the pins in Voodoo dolls. Her
arms lift up)

MARIE

(Terrified) Oh, no. My arms are floating up,
and I'm feeling as though I'm rising out my
body. STOP. I don't want to go toward that
light. (Shouts) I want to stay here, a New
Orleans girl you hear. Whoever you are.
Release me and I'll give you whatever
potions you want.

L'ESPRIT

Death is ridiculous. I put the lights on,
and I won't see it.

(Turns on the lights)

MARIE

Oh no. I'm in Mama's house. I thought we
sold that.

L'ESPRIT

Things are set up for your wake.

MARIE

Who are you? If I name people, I'm not
afraid of them.

L'ESPRIT

(Angry, mean) Your helper.

MARIE

I can tell you are a good friend as my best
friends are always instant or not. Spirits
don't grow on me.

L'ESPRIT

(Frigid, vicious) I'm Bo.

MARIE

YOU ARE LOOKING FOR MY DEAD MOTHER NOT ME.
SHE WAS MARIE LAUVEAU I. I'M NUMBER II. Why
are you reading your lines from that red
book.

L'ESPRIT

Everything is programmed in the after life.
I've been invited into the inner circle of
your death. But only as an actor. Not as a
real presence.

MARIE

And I'm sure someone thinks Ma is still
alive and wants to kill HER...not me. I
arranged her public events, that's why you
got confused.

L'ESPRIT

Why not die easily?

MARIE

People don't know she died because I dress
and look like her.

L'ESPRIT

You were bad, Marie. And your goodness gave
way.

MARIE

No people counted on me. If people had
thought Mama died, they would have distanced
themselves from Voodoo.

L'ESPRIT

I

hear you!

MARIE

My doctor said I was so strong it would take