

# Traveler's Emporium

## PILOT

Written by

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**EPISODE 1 - OPENING**

EXT. TRAVELER'S EMPORIUM - DAY

VERONICA (early 20's) bikes up to Traveler's Emporium wearing an all black server outfit. A new employee, she pauses to examine the imposing three story structure.

A murder of crows circle and CAW.

INT. TRAVELER'S EMPORIUM, FIRST FLOOR - DAY

The first floor consists of BUST Bar & Grill and The Break Café. Handsome bartender WALT (30's) and buff LEO (40's) gossip with the hip, androgynous server PAX (20's).

ANNE PERTH (40's) appears out of nowhere.

ANNE  
Veronica, hi!

VERONICA  
(startled)  
Ms. Perth! Hey!

ANNE  
Anne, please. Good to see you.

VERONICA  
Yeah, you too.

ANNE  
Let's get your name tag and  
uniform.

Anne leads Veronica into the elevator.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Anne presses the button for the third floor, and Veronica but notices ERIC (50's) sitting at the bar.

Eric, unacknowledged by the world around him, stares at Veronica with a familiar ghostly glare.

ANNE

(consulting clipboard)

So, I know I told you you'd be in the restaurant tonight, but our shipment came early on the third floor, so we're going to need you there.

As Anne talks, Eric's features freeze and harden; his features become lose their human qualities. It looks like a mask, a mannequin, or some kind of shell of a person.

The doors close, and Anne turns to Veronica.

ANNE (CONT'D)

Is that okay?

VERONICA

Uh, sure.

ANNE

Are you okay?

VERONICA

Uh -- Yeah, yeah. What do you mean shipment? I'm not serving tonight?

ANNE

No, you'll be helping set up this month's exhibit.

VERONICA

Exhibit? What do you mean exhibit?

The doors open. MOVERS remove the previous archaeological exhibit and unbox the new series of paintings.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Uh, well, I didn't apply to work in a museum...

ANNE

Technically, you did. You're an employee of Traveler's Emporium. The third floor museum is part of that. If that's a problem --

VERONICA

-- No, it's fine.

MELODY (17) enters wearing a black button-up.

ANNE

Melody! This is Veronica! It's her first day -- she's filling in up here since we've been short -- Can you get her a uniform and show her around?

MELODY

Okay. Sure. Hi, I'm Melody.

VERONICA

Veronica.

Anne checks her watch.

ANNE

Thanks, Mel.

(to Veronica)

Let me know if you need anything.

Anne rushes off to talk to a mover.

Veronica wanders over and watches the art be unpacked. It's all grisly, creepy, and strangely dreamy.

A painting with a jagged, shadowy creature hovering over a sleeping woman entrances her... Haunts her...

INT. THE MUSEUM - DAY

After changing, Veronica catches up with Melody and handsome, laidback BRANSON (20's) as they take inventory.

MELODY

Veronica, this Branson.

VERONICA

Hey, what's up?

BRANSON

Hey. Not much.

(shakes)

Nice to meet you.

VERONICA

So, what exactly are we doing? This place is a museum too?

Veronica approaches the sinister painting from before.

MELODY

Yeah, we have a rotating set-up to feature different collections, local artists --

Veronica picks up the painting.

BRANSON

Hey, don't touch that!

VERONICA

I'm just looking at it!

DING! Elevator opens and CHLOE MACON (50's) storms out of the elevator. Her billowy, ragged clothes clash, her hair is a rat's nest, and her eyes are wild.

You might think she's wearing purple lipstick, but her mouth is stained from red wine.

Anne follows her out of the elevator.

CHLOE

I want the painting back immediately, Ms. Perth! It hasn't been displayed, has it?

ANNE

No, the shipment arrived just today.

CHLOE

(to Veronica)

Put that down! What are you doing?

VERONICA

I'm sorry. I --

CHLOE

Put it down! What's wrong with you? You can't hear to put something down that you shouldn't have touched in the first place?!

Chloe grabs the painting from Veronica and glares daggers.

ANNE

Ms. Macon --

CHLOE

No...

She looks down at the woman in the painting. Everyone in the room, except Veronica, feels sympathy for her.

CHLOE (CONT'D)  
Your hands have oils and  
temperature, and they leave  
marks... I shouldn't have moved  
this in the first place.

Melody comforts her.

MELODY  
It's okay, ma'am.

ANNE  
We're very sorry for mix-up.

CHLOE  
(sighs)  
I should have kept this in the  
cupboard.

VERONICA  
I think it's interesting.

Veronica receives odd looks.

ANNE  
Why don't we have a seat at the  
bar, Ms. Macon?

Chloe glares at Veronica again before following Anne to the  
elevator, which had remained open the entire time.

When the doors close...

VERONICA  
What the hell was that?

BRANSON  
I told you to put it down.

BRANSON (CONT'D)  
Chloe Macon, local artist.

VERONICA  
Well, what was all that about?

MELODY  
She must have accidentally sent  
that painting with the ones she  
wanted to sell.

VERONICA  
Like anyone would buy this morbid  
shit.

BRANSON  
That painting was of her sister.

VERONICA  
So?

BRANSON  
So, she was **murdered** -- like, 30  
years ago. It's a full on fucked up  
thing, okay?

VERONICA  
Murdered?

MELODY  
Yeah, so just help us finish  
inventory so we can go.

VERONICA  
What happened?

BRANSON  
Her boyfriend killed her. Blamed it  
on the Boogeyman --

MELODY  
-- Branson, don't!

VERONICA  
What?

BRANSON  
Do you want to hear the story?

VERONICA  
Yes.

BRANSON  
This was in the 80s.

AN 80'S JAM PLAYS.

BRANSON (CONT'D)  
Well, she was, like, a pageant girl  
about to go off for the state  
title, and I guess he couldn't bear  
being away from her...

Veronica looks out at the dreary autumnal sky.

**END OPENING**