

TWO VAMPIRES WALK INTO A CHURCH

An exploration of queer freedom, demonization, and the intimacy of transfusion in AMC's adaptation of "Interview With the Vampire".

INTRODUCTION

AMC's *Interview With the Vampire* explores the challenges property owner Loius Du Point Du Lac faces as a queer black man in 20th century New Orleans and how his life is forever changed by the Vampire Lestat De Lioncourt. How the intimate transfusion of one's blood brings life, freedom, and must above all else be chosen carefully. After all, it's only eternity, right?

THE ELIXER OF LIFE

As with many vampiric tales, the undead of *Interview With the Vampire* rely on the blood of (primarily) humans to sustain their eternal life. And though he may not be taking it in through his veins, vampire Louis Du Point Du Lac treats his feedings much like necessary transfusions in his new 21st-century life. We see Loius join interviewer Daniel Malloy for dinner, but rather than a fancy Michelin star meal, Louis is brought a bag of donor blood. (O'Byrne, 2022) Where his feedings were once violent, they have become transactional.



(O'Byrne, 2022)

DON'T DRINK THE DEAD

Not all blood is created equal. When receiving blood one must receive blood that is compatible with their own as an agglutination (reaction of the blood) can be deadly. (Rhees, 2024) We take care in typing our blood for donation and transfusion to avoid such reactions, and the Vampires Louis and Lestat take the same kind of care in not drinking from the dead. While all sources of blood may have an allure to them, the blood of those already deceased is particularly dangerous. "We live off the blood of the living. Lap up the blood of the deceased and it'll suck you right down into death, along with your victim." (O'Byrne, 2022)

THE EMBRACE OF ANOTHER

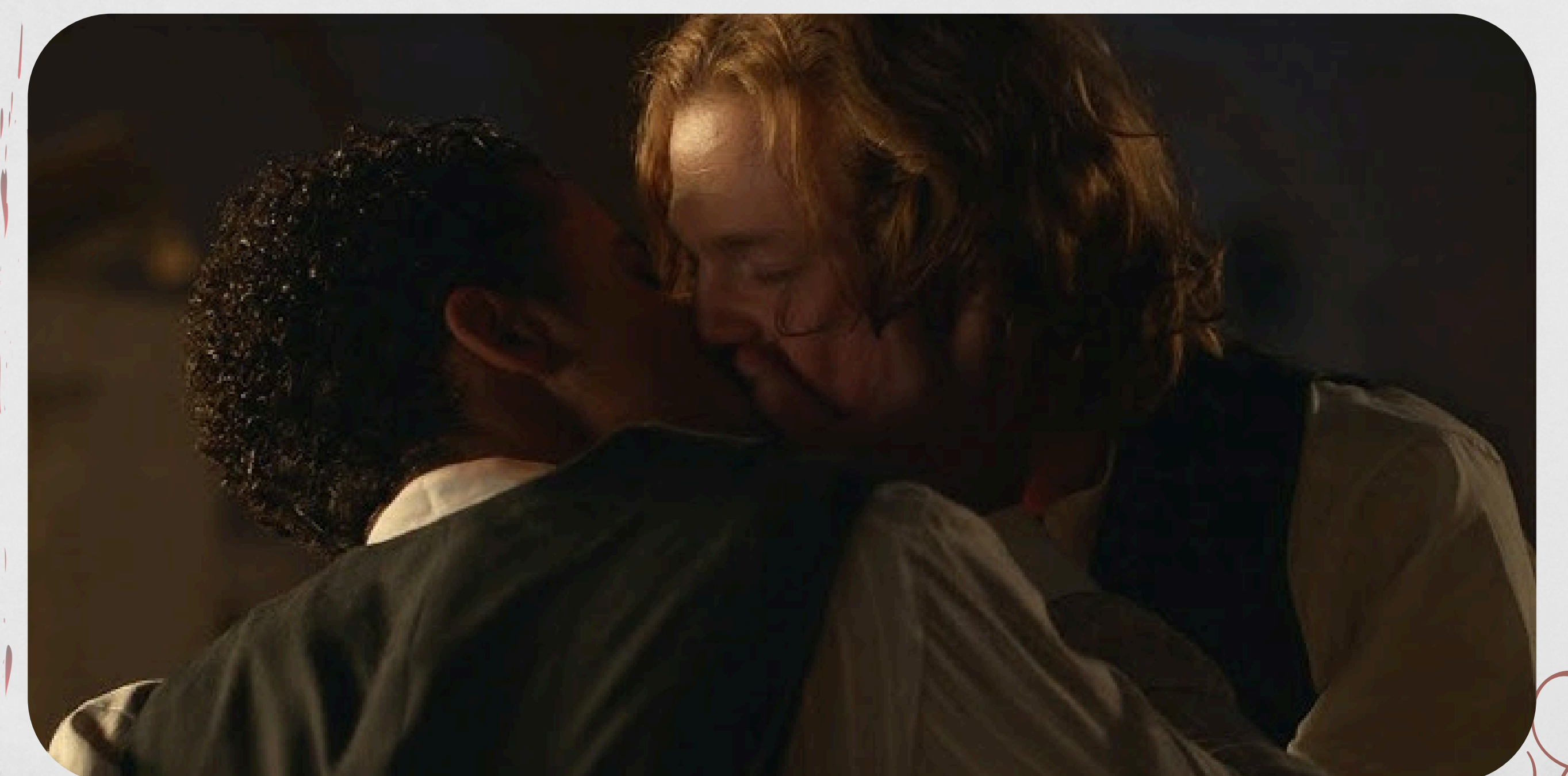
In its early days, blood transfusion was quite the intimate endeavor for one to take on. "Transfusions typically involved connecting blood vessels of donor and recipient..." (Pierce) There was no anonymity in the giving or receiving of blood, (Jones, 2024) much like how there is little anonymity in the act of sex. Both can symbolically give or bring life, and both can symbolically transmute death (incorrect blood typing, a sexually transmitted disease)(Tissot & Lion, 2013), and as such it can be hypothesized that blood transfusion can be a surrogate expression for sex.

Louis' transformation is not only a display of the intimacies of blood transfusion, having the life "drained" from him by Lestat and in return drinking Lestat's blood to give him undeath, it is also an allegory for the sexual freedom Louis finds as a vampire. Before transformation, he is ashamed of his desires, and after, he commands respect and embraces his nature.

"IN MY VEINS... THE DRUM WAS MY HEART, AND THE OTHER DRUM HAD BEEN HIS."

(O'BYRNE, 2022)

AMC's *Interview With the Vampire* offers us a unique look into undeath as a queer vampire through the lens of the life-giving ritual of blood transfusion and its allegories for intimacy. It gives us a new perspective on the classic vampire story with its humanization of how ethically Loius seeks to feed and how important it is to feel seen in an unforgiving world. This research was conducted over a short period, and in addition to this presentation, deserves to be more carefully examined in the future.



(O'Byrne, 2022)