

MONSTER COURT

"Pilot"

by Michael Tanner

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. VILLAGE - MORNING

A quiet village in a serene valley. Little cottages in cute little rows. Church steeples rise above any other buildings. Main Street is starting to come alive with shops opening and friendly people making their way to work.

The mailman makes his rounds.

EXT. VILLAGE - RESIDENTIAL STREET -- MORNING

Two NEIGHBORS, consummate suburban dads, make their way down their walks-ways to the mail boxes.

NEIGHBOR #1

Morning.

NEIGHBOR #2

Morning.

NEIGHBOR #1

Say, I couldn't help but notice that the branches from your apple tree are drooping onto my side of the property line. Would you mind trimming them?

NEIGHBOR #2

Will do, neighbor. Speaking of plants, did you hear about the vandalism in the town square?

NEIGHBOR #1

The prized azalea bushes.

NEIGHBOR #2

Crying shame.

They each find an orange envelope in their boxes.

NEIGHBOR #1

This looks like junk mail.

They open their envelopes simultaneously.

NEIGHBOR #1 (CONT'D)

(reading)

You are hereby summoned for jury duty this afternoon. Report to the spooky house on the hill?

NEIGHBOR #2

...for Monster Court?

The two neighbors look up to the hill overlooking town. A spooky haunted house is perched on top. A wolf howls. Bats fly about. Even though there's not a cloud in the sky, a lightning bolt strikes behind the house.

-OPENING CREDITS-

EXT. DESERT - DAY

EXTREME CLOSE UP: JACK O' LANTERN

(Although it is the JACK O' LANTERN talking, its mouth does not move.)

JACK O' LANTERN

Monsters are real. They have existed for centuries, living in man's shadow. In order to survive the monsters have spread lies and falsehoods about themselves. For instance; Werewolves are not hurt by silver bullets. They actually collect silver to make exotic jewelry. And Draculas would have you believe that a stake through the heart can kill them. In fact, only hitting them with a lead hammer will do it. Don't worry though, monsters no longer kill people. It's out of fashion. Although they will kill in self-defense. Monsters have their own customs and culture and of course, laws. When a monster breaks one of those laws they are taken to court, Monster Court.

The camera pulls back suddenly revealing the Jack O' Lantern, dressed as a cowboy and riding a giant spider through the desert.

JACK O' LANTERN (CONT'D)

I am a Jack O' Lantern, riding a spider. And this is Monster Court.

INT. MONSTER COURT - COURTROOM - DAY

It looks like a typical courtroom, except for the creatures inside of it. JUDGE RED DEVIL, a large red devil, complete with a tail and a pitch fork for gavel, presides. The defendant, Mr. Werewolf, a werewolf, is dressed like a 90s rapper. He wears a lot of silver jewelry.

On one side of the court stands a FRANKENSTEIN (complete with neck bolts and stitching). Next to him on the table is a normal looking BLACK CAT, luxuriously licking himself. There is an empty seat at their table. Frankenstein looks at the empty seat anxiously.

JUDGE RED DEVIL

Well, Mr. Frankenstein's Monster you promised startling new evidence that would shake the foundations of this case. Do not hold the court in suspense.

Frankenstein steps out from behind the table and approaches the bench.

FRANKENSTEIN

Your honor, I think our distinguished opposition has failed to prove their case regardless of any new evidence that may spectacularly appear at any moment.

JUDGE RED DEVIL

Mr. Frankenstein's Monster, you appear to be stalling. I do not cotton to stalling in my courtroom.

FRANKENSTEIN

Your honor I am shocked- Shocked! - that you would think that.

JUDGE RED DEVIL

You are on thin ice and I am getting hot.

FRANKENSTEIN

There's a "hell freezing over" joke to be made there.

Frankenstein chuckles. The Judge does not.

Th legal team on the other side of the court stands up in protest. This team is made up of two other FRANKENSTEINS (the only shared features are the stitching and neck bolts).

FRANKENSTEINS #1

Your honor, this is so typical.

FRANKENSTEINS #2

How much more can the court honestly stand of this tom-foolery?

The doors at the back of the courtroom fly open. A DRACULA, (dressed as all Draculas-in the manner of Bela Lugosi) strides down the aisle. He carries with him an oversized photograph.

DRACULA

Permit me, your honor.

FRANKENSTEIN

(quietly to Dracula)
About time.

DRACULA

Sorry, I got held up in traffic.
It's like a skeleton dance party out
there.

FRANKENSTEIN

You found evidence?

DRACULA

Leave it to me.

FRANKENSTEIN

(pumped)

Let's win this.

Frankenstein goes back behind his table and sits down. The
Black Cat continues to lick himself.

DRACULA

Your honor, I present this photograph
taken from the crime scene. It is a
werewolf footprint. A werewolf print
missing its big toe. The defendant,
Mr. Werewolf, is missing his big
toe.

ANGLE ON MR. WEREWOLF'S FOOT AND THE MISSING BIG TOE

DRACULA (CONT'D)

Therefore, the defendant must be
guilty!

Frankenstein hits his head on the table causing it to crack
in half.

INT. MONSTER COURT - OFFICE OF DRACULA, FRANKENSTEIN'S
MONSTER AND BLACK CAT - DAY

The three partners walk into their office. Frankenstein
picks up a feather-duster on his immaculately clean desk and
begins furiously dusting.

FRANKENSTEIN

We're the defense! He was our client!

DRACULA

Sue me, I forgot.

Black Cat hops onto a tiny perch in the corner.

BLACK CAT

I knew you should have sent me into
town. I just got the witch serviced.

FRANKENSTEIN

Too late now! Dracula, you've cost
us another case.

DRACULA

I'm sorry. I'm dehydrated. Not thinking clearly.

He sits down at this cluttered desk and opens a mini-fridge tucked underneath. Taking out a small pitcher filled with red liquid, he pours himself a glass and drinks.

DRACULA (CONT'D)

Delicious.

Frankenstein knocks the glass out his hand.

DRACULA (CONT'D)

That was just rude.

FRANKENSTEIN

You're right. I am sorry. I shouldn't let my temper get out of control.

Black Cat starts licking up the spilled liquid.

BLACK CAT

Mmmm. What flavor is this?

DRACULA

Razzle Dazzle Raspberry. It's new. And improved!

BLACK CAT

This is good.

DRACULA

Isn't it? Made with Splenda.

There is a knock on the office door.

FRANKENSTEIN

Quiet. It could be a client.

DRACULA

Let's hide!

FRANKENSTEIN

No. Let's be professional.

(to the door)

Come in.

The door opens and a skeleton pushing a lunch cart comes in. This is OL BONEY, an old (even for a skeleton) and grizzled but friendly skeleton. (All skeletons dance in some fashion constantly, his dance expresses itself as a jazzy head bob.)

OL BONEY

How you doing boys?

DRACULA

Ol Boney!

OL BONEY

Can I get you some lunch?

FRANKENSTEIN

No thanks, Ol Boney.

DRACULA

Same here.

OL BONEY

What about you Black Cat?

Black Cat continues licking the drink off the floor.

BLACK CAT

Nah, I'm good.

OL BONEY

Are you sure? I've got soup.

BLACK CAT

I make my own.

OL BONEY

Well, all right then.

Ol Boney pulls his cart out of the office. A sexy LADY DRACULA walks past him into the office. Dracula is quite smitten.

Frankenstein steps forward to greet her, but is cut off by Dracula.

DRACULA

Good evening.

LADY DRACULA

Good evening. Is this the law firm of Dracula, Frankenstein's Monster and Black Cat?

DRACULA

Of course. I am Dracula.

Frankenstein extends his hand.

FRANKENSTEIN

Frankenstein's Monster. And this is Black Cat.

Black Cat continues to lick up the spilled Razzle Dazzle Raspberry.

FRANKENSTEIN (CONT'D)

So how can we help you?

LADY DRACULA

I need a lawyer.

DRACULA
 (trying hard to be
 charming)
 Ha Ha. You are obviously not a count
 Dracula, we're three lawyers.

FRANKENSTEIN
 Please, stop.

LADY DRACULA
 It's for my husband.

DRACULA
 Oh. Our docket is full.

FRANKENSTEIN
 Nonsense. Tell us the details.

LADY DRACULA
 My husband, also a Dracula, is accused
 of destroying public property down
 in the village.

DRACULA
 That's a serious crime for a monster.

FRANKENSTEIN
 And he didn't do it?

LADY DRACULA
 No. At least, I don't think so.

DRACULA
 What if he did? Would you divorce
 him?

LADY DRACULA
 No. I love him.

DRACULA
 Would you be open to having an affair
 while he's in Monster Jail?

LADY DRACULA
 No.

DRACULA
 What if-

FRANKENSTEIN
 (to Dracula)
 Seriously.

LADY DRACULA
 I feel so terrible. We got into a
 fight and he stormed out. If it
 wasn't for me he'd have been safe at
 home.

Frankenstein is touched.

FRANKENSTEIN

Mrs. Dracula, we'll take your case.

DRACULA

I'll go into town and investigate.

FRANKENSTEIN

No you won't. Black Cat, take your witch and see if you can find any clues. Dracula and I will take Mrs. Dracula to interview her husband Mr. Dracula.

Dracula, Lady Dracula and Frankenstein leave the office. Black Cat walks over to a closet and opens the door.

BLACK CAT

Witch, come to me.

A mechanical witch steps out of the closet. It cackles.

BLACK CAT (CONT'D)

Witch, transform.

The witch transforms, like a Transformer, into something resembling a Harley Davidson and a witch riding a broomstick. Black Cat jumps onto a little seat between the handlebars.

BLACK CAT (CONT'D)

Witch, fly!

The witch rises off the ground and shoots like a rocket out of the boarded up window of the office. It cackles as it does so.

EXT. MONSTER COURT - CONTINUOUS

The witch flies a few circles around the haunted house that is Monster Court and then flies toward the village.

INT. MONSTER COURT - JAIL - DAY

Dracula, Frankenstein, and Lady Dracula stand outside of MR. DRACULA's cell. Mr. Dracula sits dejected on his cot. He wears old-timey prison stripes with his Dracula cape.

FRANKENSTEIN

Mr. Dracula, can you tell us what happened.

MR. DRACULA

Not much to tell I'm afraid.

CUT TO FLASHBACK:

EXT. VILLAGE - TOWN SQUARE - EVENING

Mr. Dracula hides behind the village's prized azalea bushes-- a blue ribbon hangs off of one of the branches. The bushes are planted next to a gazebo.

A LITTLE OLD LADY sits on a bench reading nearby.

Mr. Dracula takes out a long thick straw from his cloak. He then removes his fangs from his mouth and puts them in the straw. He blows through the straw and shoots the fangs at the old lady. They strike her in the neck and she falls over on to the ground. Mr. Dracula then runs over and starts lapping up the blood beginning to pool around her neck.

He hears a twig snap like someone is approaching. He is frightened and runs off.

CUT TO PRESENT:

INT. MONSTER COURT - JAIL - SAME

Mr. Dracula opens his mouth revealing his missing fangs.

MR. DRACULA

I left my fangs. That's how they caught me.

He hangs his head in shame. Dracula is disgusted.

DRACULA

You're half a monster!

Frankenstein covers Dracula's mouth.

FRANKENSTEIN

So the azalea bushes were intact when you fled?

MR. DRACULA

Yes. I swear.

DRACULA

How'd they get destroyed then?

MR. DRACULA

I don't know! I wish I knew.

LADY DRACULA

Oh sweetheart.

She reaches out to him.

FRANKENSTEIN

Monster Court moves fast. Dracula and I have to make our opening arguments in front of Judge Red Devil. If Black Cat finds out anything, we'll keep you two up o date.

The married Draculas share a moment before the three depart.

INT. MONSTER COURT - DAY

The courtroom is empty except for Judge Red Devil and the jury.

The jury is made up of frightened and/or stunned humans.
Judge Red Devil addresses them.

JUDGE RED DEVIL

I want to thank you for taking time
out of your busy mortal lives to
help inflict monster law. Some crimes
are large while some are small.
Some are clear like a mountain stream
and some wade in a fetid swamp of
confusion. I ask you to listen and
evaluate each side's case and try to
find the most honest truth. As
humans, you are the only ones fit to
pass final judgment on monsters. We
hope you take these proceedings as
serious as we do. Again, I thank
you.

The two neighbors from the opening sit next to each other in
the jury box. They are both mouths agape. Behind them sits
a excited simpleton JUROR.

NEIGHBOR #1

Is that the devil?

NEIGHBOR #2

I think we died. When did we die?

JUROR

Is this your first time? It's a
great show. I'm been summoned three
times.

NEIGHBOR #2

You've been here before?

NEIGHBOR #1

It's a show?

JUROR

I tell myself that to keep me sane.