

## Terror Tidbits (Fango #295)—“TRUE BLOOD” Bites Deeper

Written by Abbie Bernstein  
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“There’s a lot of extreme stuff this year,” promises TRUE BLOOD series creator/executive producer Alan Ball. “There are a lot of prosthetic parts.” He pauses for effect. “Let me just say, yes, there will be blood.”

There’s no reason to doubt the man. In its first two seasons, the HBO series based on Charlaine Harris’ books about telepathic waitress Sookie Stackhouse and her interactions with a vampire community gone public with their existence—plus more secretive supernatural beings—has featured as much murder and dismemberment (not to mention sex) as any TV show in memory.



If Ball’s words and the scene being filmed today are anything to go by, season three (which debuted this month) promises more of the same. Stage Five at the West Hollywood studio facility now called The Lot (it was formerly Warner Hollywood) houses the dank, creepy, chain-draped basement of the vampire nightclub Fangtasia. Season-two viewers will remember it as the site where vampire sheriff and Fangtasia owner Eric Northman, played by Alexander Skarsgård, angrily ripped apart a mortal, with human prisoner Lafayette (Nelsan Ellis) later digging through the flesh of the severed leg to recover a metal implant for use as an escape tool. Something heavy-duty is going on in the basement again today, involving Eric, his progeny/lieutenant Pam (Kristin Bauer), the bloodsucker Magister (Zeljko Ivanek), undead Queen of Louisiana Sophie-Anne LeClerq (Evan Rachel Wood) and a character just introduced this year, King of Mississippi Russell Edgington (Denis O’Hare).

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O'Hare, who won a Tony for his role in Broadway's TAKE ME OUT, says this is his first time in fangs since he dressed as Dracula for his eighth Halloween. "I love the show," he raves. "I watch it anyway, and had no idea I would ever be on it. All characters are great when you start to research them, but it's really a treat to play one who has any kind of special powers. And this guy is particularly fun. This is someone who is so happy to be alive, pardon the irony."

Ball is also excited about this year overall. "I'm really, really happy with this season. Every episode has a very strong moment where you really can't believe what you're seeing. The actors are all at the top of their game, and the writers are consistently giving me strong scripts. I just feel like the show truly hits its stride this year in a way that's gratifying to watch, and it's also nice because I can sort of relax. Because it's the right group of people, everybody knows exactly what they're doing, and it's just fun. I mean, I'm very excited to go to my car and come to work every day."

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