

Old Gods of Appalachia
Season 1: Barlo

Episode 3
The Witch Queen

FADE IN:

INT. DAUGHTER DOOLEY'S WAGON- DAY

JUST EAST OF THE CUMBERLAND GAP, APRIL 1778

**BLESSED FOLK OF HIS UNENDING AND UNDYING GRACIOUS LOVE
SETTLEMENT**

DAUGHTER DOOLEY, 22, IS IN THE CANVAS-TOPPED CARAVAN WAGON WHICH SERVES AS HER HOME. DRIED HERBS HANG FROM THE CEILING. THERE IS A SMALL LACE-COVERED TABLE WITH TWO SIMPLE WOODEN CHAIRS. A HEALER'S BOX STANDS OPEN ON THE TABLE, DISPLAYING VIALS OF HERBS AND SALVES. A SMALL PAINTING OF TWO DARK HAired WOMEN WITH A SMALL GIRL BETWEEN THEM SITS ON THE TINY SIDE TABLE NEXT TO THE QUILT-COVERED STRAW MATTRESS. THREE MASSIVE AND WELL-MADE CEDAR CHESTS TAKE UP AN ENTIRE QUADRANT OF THE SPACE. MIRROR-BACKED OIL LAMPS CAST EVERYTHING IN A WARM GOLD GLOW.

DAUGHTER DOOLEY IS AT THE TABLE, POUNDING HERBS IN A STONE MORTAR WHICH IS COVERED IN MOSTLY WORN AWAY SYMBOLS.

PASTOR CHILDRESS (O.S)

Goodie Dooley? Are you in there,
child?

DOOLEY RISES FROM THE TABLE AND OPENS THE CANVAS FLAP THAT IS HER FRONT DOOR.

CUT TO:

CUT IN:

EXT. DAUGHTER DOOLEY'S WAGON- CONTINUOUS

THE PASTOR STANDS WITH **ELDERS RAYMOND, WILLIAMS, AND EASTON,** AND ALSO HIS SON **MOSES,** WHO IS COVERED IN BANDAGES AND STARING AT HER TERRIFIED.

DOOLEY LEANS OUT AND SMILES POLITELY.

DAUGHTER DOOLEY

Good morning, Pastor Childress.
And good morning to the rest of
you gentlemen as well!

SHE GIVES A SUBTLE COY LOOK TO MOSES.

PASTOR CHILDRESS

Would you mind coming out here for
a moment? There's something we
would like to—uhm—discuss—with
you.

DAUGHTER DOOLEY

Certainly. Should I fetch my
kettle? My fire's banked, but I
could still make us all some tea—

PASTOR CHILDRESS

(a bit too quickly) Oh, That won't be necessary, Goodie.

THE OTHER MEN'S EYES WIDEN ANXIOUSLY.

DAUGHTER DOOLEY

Very well then.

HEAD HIGH AND BODY RELAXED, SHE STEPS DOWN AND OUT OF THE WAGON.

DAUGHTER DOOLEY

What is it you would like to discuss, Pastor?

MOSES

You know damn well what, *witch!*

PASTOR CHILDRESS

if you can't control yourself, son, you can just head right on back home to your momma.

PASTOR CHILDRESS PUTS A FIRM HAND ON HIS SON AND PULLS HIM BACK.

ELDER RAYMOND

(clears his throat nervously.)
Moses here came to us last night
after prayer, looking like he'd
met the wrong end of a
cattywampus. And he had quite a
tale to tell, Miss Dooley.

DOOLEY

Is that so? And what might that
tale have been?

PASTOR CHILDRESS

He says that you tried to kiss him
when y'all was alone after the
meeting, and when he refused you,
you changed your shape and
attacked him. In short, he has
named you a witch, Goodie Dooley.

DAUGHTER DOOLEY ARCHES AN EYEBROW, BOTH UNSURPRISED AND
UNIMPRESSED.

DOOLEY

Seems to me that you gentlemen
have already decided the truth of
this matter, Pastor Childress.

ELDER EASTON IS WHITE KNUCKLING A BIBLE.

ELDER EASTON

We have noticed a few—well,
strange—happenings in the months
since we began to stake out this
land for our camp. Happenings
whose only commonality between
them is you.

PASTOR CHILDRESS

You, your mother, and your aunt
(*Daughter Dooley chuffs and rolls
her eyes*) before you, bless their
souls, have been invaluable for
your healing. But this is a severe
accusation.

PASTOR CHILDRESS NODS AT **THE ELDERS**, WHO THEN CAUTIOUSLY ENTER
DAUGHTER DOOLEY'S WAGON.

SHUFFLING AND RUMMAGING IS HEARD FROM WITHIN.

DAUGHTER DOOLEY'S UNRUFFLED DEMEANOR FINALLY BREAKS AND HER
HACKLES RAISE—FIGURATIVELY, THIS TIME.

DAUGHTER DOOLEY

Excuse me, Pastor, but what do you
and the Elders think you're doing?

ELDER EASTON

Jacob, you need to see this!

CUT TO:

FADE IN:

INT. DAUGHTER DOOLEY'S WAGON- CONT.

DAUGHTER DOOLEY'S PREVIOUSLY TIDY LIVING SPACE IS RANSACKED. THE THREE CHESTS ARE WIDE OPEN, REVEALING MORE THAN JUST CLOTHING: JARS SEALED IN WAX AND FILLED WITH STRANGE MIXTURES. LEATHER-BOUND BOOKS COVERED IN PAGAN SYMBOLS. CHARMS AND TALISMANS. EVERYTHING HER MOTHERS HAD LEFT HER UPON THEIR DEATHS.

MOSES

(screaming) What I tell you, daddy? This woman is the bride of the Devil!

MOSES POINTS AT DAUGHTER DOOLEY ACCUSINGLY. HE STAYS AS CLOSE TO THE OPENING AS POSSIBLE.

ELDER WILLIAMS STARES AT THE ITEMS, SOLEMN AND DEEPLY DISTURBED.

ELDER WILLIAMS

Not a Bible to be found..

PASTOR CHILDRESS

What is all this?

DOOLEY

Everything my mothers left me
before they died on our journey
West. Family heirlooms. Charms and
protections. My linens.

PASTOR CHILDRESS

Goodie Dooley, are you confessing
to the crime of witchcraft?

DOOLEY

(proudly) I am a witch, but I am
not guilty.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

EXT. BLESSED FOLK SETTLEMENT, OUTER EDGE- NEAR DUSK

ALL THE **BLESSED FOLK** ARE PRESENT FOR THE BANISHING.

A HORSE-DRAWN WAGON IS LADEN WITH ALL OF DAUGHTER DOOLEY'S
BELONGINGS, ALL PACKIED INTO HER THREE CHESTS.

DAUGHTER DOOLEY'S WRISTS ARE BOUND AND A CANVAS BAG COVERS HER
HEAD.

ELDER RAYMOND SPINS HER BY THE SHOULDERS, MUTTERING THE NAMES OF
THE APOSTLES AS HE DOES. NOW FULLY DIZZY, HE LOADS HER ONTO THE
BACK OF THE CART.

PASTOR CHILDRESS PRAYS LOUDLY, HANDS AND BIBLE LIFTED TO THE HEAVENS.

PASTOR CHILDRESS

Oh Ever-Gracious and Ever-Just God of All, we your Blessed Folk in your name cast this witch out into the wilderness! It is not Your way to burn or to hang, but the sin of witchcraft cannot go unpunished!

As it is written: Thou shall not suffer a witch to live! So we banish this friend of demons, this concubine of Satan, from our community! May she meet her deserving end, and let her body fade to dust without a Christian burial, and may she find no peace as her tarnished soul is cast into the Fiery Pit! Amen!

THE CROWD CHORUSES WITH AMENS AND JEERS AND SHOUTS.

ELDER RAYMOND AND **ELDER WILLIAMS** TAKE THEIR SEATS AT THE FRONT OF THE WAGON AND TRUNDLE OFF INTO THE WILDERNESS.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

EXT. DOOLEY VALLEY- TWILIGHT

A TINY, VINE-CHOKED VALLEY DEEP IN THE WOODS. A PITIFUL ONE-ROOM WOODEN SHACK STANDS IN THE CENTER, HASTILY MADE AND BARELY STANDING ON ITS OWN.

DAUGHTER DOOLEY STEPS OFF THE CART, HEAD STILL HOODED. THE MEN HOLD EACH OF HER ARMS AS THEY HELP HER DOWN.

THE MEN UNLOAD THE TRUNKS INTO THE SHACK THEY BUILT FOR HER. THEY WORK SILENTLY, GIVING THE HOODED GIRL A WIDE BERTH. THE LOOKS ON THEIR FACES REMINISCENT OF PALL BEARERS AT A FUNERAL.

DOOLEY

Better mind them trunks,
gentlemen.

ELDER WILLIAMS JUMPS AS HE PASSES A BIT TOO CLOSE TO HER.

ELDER WILLIAMS

Q-Quiet, witch.

CART FULLY UNLOADED, **ELDER WILLIAMS** JUMPS BACK ONTO THE CART AND TAKES THE REINS.

ELDER RAYMOND APPROACHES THE GIRL WARILY AND PULLS A LARGE HUNTING KNIFE FROM HIS BELT. HE CUTS THE BONDS FROM DAUGHTER DOOLEY'S WRISTS, BUT DOES NOT TOUCH THE BAG OVER HER HEAD.

DOOLEY STANDS PERFECTLY STILL AMONG HER BELONGINGS AS **ELDER RAYMOND** QUICKLY RETURNS TO THE WAGON AND THE TWO MEN LEAVE THE VALLEY, LEAVING DAUGHTER DOOLEY COMPLETELY ALONE.

DOOLEY PULLS THE HOOD OFF AND TAKES IN HER SURROUNDINGS, STOPPING AND EYEING THE SHACK CRITICALLY.

DOOLEY

Well, ain't this quaint.

SHE PICKS UP ONE SIDE OF A CHEST AND BEGINS TO DRAG IT INSIDE HER NEW HOME.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

EXT. DOOLEY VALLEY- DAY

MONTAGE OF DAUGHTER SETTING ABOUT MAKING A LIFE FOR HERSELF:

FISHING.

CLEARING BRUSH FROM AROUND HER SHACK.

WORKING A SMALL GARDEN OF VARIOUS HERBS AND VEGETABLES.

BURYING JARS OF RUSTED NAILS AND RED-BLACK SLUDGE AT THE CORNERS
OF HER PROPERTY.

SINGING AS SHE CHOPS FIREWOOD AND LUMBER.

DANCING BENEATH THE MOON AROUND A TORCH, BLAZING WITH GREEN
FIRE.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

INT. DOOLEY SHACK- NIGHT

DAUGHTER DOOLEY IS ASLEEP IN HER BED. A HALF MOON LIGHTS HER
FACE FROM A WINDOW.

MA EDIE (O.S)

Daughter? Sweet babe? You in
there?

DOOLEY RISES AND LIGHTS THE CANDLE ON HER SMALL, ROUGH-HEWN
NIGHTSTAND.

DOOLEY

What fresh hell-?

SUSPICIOUS AND CAUTIOUS, SHE WRAPS HERSELF IN A LOOSE-WOVEN
SHAWL AND MAKES HER WAY INTO THE DARKENED YARD.

CUT TO:

FADE IN:

EXT. DOOLEY SHACK- CONT.

A FIGURE IS PACING JUST OUTSIDE THE BOUNDARY SHE'D MARKED. THE BARRIER LINES SHE'D SET WITH THE JARS BURIED AT EACH CORNER OF HER LAND HOLDS STRONG. SHE LIFTS AN EYEBROW. **MA EDIE** STEPS CLOSER TO THE BOUNDARY AND INTO THE MOONLIGHT.

MA EDIE

(A strong Irish accent) Hello my love. It's good to see ya.

DAUGHTER DOOLEY'S EYES WIDEN. THERE IS LONGING THERE FOR A MOMENT, THEN HER EXPRESSION HARDENS AGAIN. SHE KNOWS THIS IS NOT HER MOTHER.

DOOLEY

Oh hello ma! Been gone a while, have you not?

MA EDIE

Yes child. We've missed you so, your mama Kathryn and I. We-

DOOLEY

Oh you've got to try harder than that! Ye never called Ma Katie anything but Katie since I was born. Pssh! Kathryn! What are ya, her priest? Try again, spirit.

DOOLEY TURNS AND RE-ENTERS HER HOUSE AND HER BED.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

INT. DOOLEY SHACK- THE NEXT NIGHT

DOOLEY IS ALSEEP AGAIN IN BED. AGAIN, NOISES FROM OUTSIDE WAKEN HER.

DOOLEY RISES AT THE SOUNDS AND SHAKES HER HEAD WEARILY. SHE GRABS THE CANDLE AND HER SHAWL AND GOES TO STAND AT THE THRESHOLD OF HER FRONT DOOR.

CUT TO:

FADE IN:

EXT. DOOLEY SHACK- CONT.

THE WIND BLOWS COLDER, AND A WAXING CRESCENT MOON PEEKS IN AND OUT OF PASSING CLOUDS. HER CANDLE GUTTERS OUT AND SHE WRAPS THE SHAWL TIGHTER AROUND HERSELF, SHIVERING.

MA KATIE SITS BESIDE A FIRE SET RIGHT OUTSIDE OF HER WARDS.

MA KATIE

(Simialer accent to Ma Edie) Oy, smartass! Come over here and help me put this meat on the fire.

MA KATIE IS STRUGGLING WITH A HAUNCH OF SPITTED MEAT UNLIKE ANYTHING THEY'D HAD SINCE THE LEFT THE CHESAPEAKE.

DOOLEY'S MOUTH WATERS AND SHE LICKS HER LIP DRILY. SHE SIGHS LOUDLY AND DRAMATICALLY.

DOOLEY

Oh, I wish I could Ma, but I've been living hard out here since ya left me! My feet and me back are

(cont'd)

all achy and stiff! Why don't ya come in and set a spell? I could make us tea...

DOOLEY SMILES ARCHLY. **MA KATIE** GLOWERS BACK AS **DOOLEY** FURTHER TAUNTS THE SPIRIT BY GESTURING GRANDLY INTO HER HOUSE.

DOOLEY

Are ya completely stupid, spirit? I made sure to think about how Ma Katie would love nothing more than to roast me a bit o' lamb all day, and lo! Here ya are! But you don't know her at all, do ya spirit? Ma Katie couldn't abide lamb. She couldn't have it, couldn't smell it! Made her so sick she'd shit out a Bible, she could. Come back tomorrow. Show me your true face, or don't come at all.

THE FIRE BLINKS OUT. THE LAMB AND MA KATIE ARE GONE.

DOOLEY WIPES A SINGLE ESCAPED TEAR FROM HER FACE. SHE SLAMS THE DOOR AS SHE GOES BACK INSIDE.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

EXT. DOOLEY SHACK, YARD- THE NEXT MORNING

DOOLEY INSPECTS MASON JARS FULL OF RUSTY NAILS COVERED IN A CLOTTED BLOODY MIXTURE. SHE IS BURYING MORE PROTECTION JARS AT THE CORNER POINTS OF HER LAND.

CUT TO:

FADE IN:

INT. DOOLEY SHACK- LATER

DOOLEY HAMMERING THICK IRON NAILS INTO THE TOP CORNERS OF EVERY DOORFRAME IN HER HOUSE.

CUT TO:

FADE IN:

INT. DOOLEY SHACK- NEAR EVENING

DOOLEY IS LIT BY CANDLELIGHT, KNEELING IN FRONT OF HER MOTHERS' LARGE CEDAR CHESTS. SHE IS MUTTERING AN INCANTATION TO HERSELF AS SHE DABS SPECIAL OILS ON HER FOREHEAD, LIPS, COLLARBONES, WRISTS, PALMS, BREASTS, AND NAVEL.

CUT TO:

FADE IN:

INT. DOOLEY SHACK- LATE NIGHT

NEW MOON. NO WIND. **DOOLEY** NEVER WENT TO SLEEP. SHE SITS ON THE EDGE OF HER BED AND WAITS. SHE GLANCES AT THE STARS OUT HER WINDOW AND THEN GOES TO ONCE AGAIN LEAVE HER HOUSE.

CUT TO:

FADE IN:

EXT. DOOLEY SHACK- CONT.

DAUGHTER IS AT HER THRESHOLD. SHE LOOKS TOWARD THE DARK GREEN OF THE VALLEY. THE DENSE TANGLES OF BRIARS AND BRAMBLES AND PRICKERS AND TAKES A SINGLE STEP OUT OF HER HOUSE, FEET BARE.

THE WOODS IN FRONT OF HER STIR.

THE SOUND OF SOMETHING LARGE COMES FROM DEEP WITHIN THE WOOD. LOUDER AND LOUDER IT GROWS UNTIL THE LARGEST BUCK SHE'S EVER SEEN PUSHES OUT OF THE TREES. THIS IS **THE THING WHO'S NAME SOUNDS LIKE HORNEDED HEAD BUT IS NOT.**

HORNEDED HEAD'S COAT IS BLACK AS SOOT. ITS HOOVES ARE WET WITH A VISCOUS SMEARING BROWN. ITS EYES BURN WITH A FOUL BLOOD-COLORED LIGHT. ITS ANTLERS ARE TRANSLUCENT AND HONEY-COLORED, PULSING WITH A LOW POISONOUS SMOLDER, BITS OF ASH FALLING FROM THEM HERE.

IT COMES TO THE EDGE OF HER BOUNDARY AND REARS AND SNORTS.
ITS WET HOOVES SNAP AGAINST THE INVISIBLE BARRIER. AFTER A
MOMENT IT SETTLES AND MEETS HER EYES EVENLY.

DOOLEY STARES BACK HARD. SHE IS UNMOVED BY THE BUCK'S GAUDY
DISPLAY.

DOOLEY

Hail, spirit.

HORNED HEAD

HAIL, WITCH. I AM NO SPIRIT.

ITS MOUTH DOES NOT MOVE, BUT ITS DEEP AND ANCIENT VOICE FILLS
THE VALLEY AND DAUGHTER DOOLEY'S HEAD.

DOOLEY

Hail, demon then.

HORNED HEAD LAUGHS WITH A SOUND LIKE SOMEONE DROWNING.

HORNED HEAD

*YOU HAVE NOT A NAME FOR WHAT I AM.
THOUGH SOME WOULD CALL ME— (It
makes a sound that might have been
a word but felt more like a blow.)*

FOR THE FIRST TIME, **DOOLEY** FLINCHES.

HORNED HEAD

*I COME TO OFFER YOU MUCH, LITTLE
WITCH. WE SEE THAT YOU HAVE
KINSHIP WITH THIS LAND. WE SEE IT
FEED YOU. WE SEE IT KEEP YOU SAFER
THAN THE FOOLS WHO PUT YOU HERE.*

DOOLEY

Aye, then you know who and what my
mothers were, and what I am. I'm
just fine out here, and I've drawn
my lines and set my house so
there's nothing I need from you.
And don't offer to let me see my
mas again! They're gone! Playing
mummers with their faces is just
cruel and it won't get you
anywhere. You said you had an
offer, so say true or begone,
beast!

HORNED HEAD PACES THE LINE OF HER MARKING.

HORNED HEAD

*YOU SPEAK TRUE, LITTLE WITCH.
DEATH IS DEAD IN THIS PLACE, TO
THE POINT THAT YOU SPEAK AND
UNDERSTAND. BUT WHAT IF YOU NEVER
HAD TO KNOW ITS STING?*

DOOLEY

(laughs) You sound like the church
people! You want me to read your
Bible? Sing in your choir?

HORNED HEAD PAWS THE EARTH AND SNORTS DERISIVELY.

HORNED HEAD

*THERE ARE MORE BOOKS THAN YOU
COULD EVER READ, LITTLE WITCH, AND
WE COULD GIVE YOU ALL OF THEM AND
MORE. WE HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF AGES.
WE HAVE POWER. WE HAVE TUTORS WHO
COULD TEACH YOU THINGS YOUR
MOTHERS COULD NEVER KNOW. MORE
IMPORTANTLY, WE COULD GIVE YOU
THIS LAND.*

DOOLEY

I got land, beast. Don't you see
my fine palace and my sprawling
manor grounds?

SHE GESTURES GRANDLY AT HER HUMBLE HOLDINGS.

HORNED HEAD CHUCKLES A VULGAR AND CARNAL SOUND THAT MAKES **DOOLEY**
TINGLE AND BLUSH. GOOSEFESH RIPPLES HER SKIN.

HORNED HEAD

*YOU HOLD THIS PATCH FOR NOW,
CHILD. THESE LINES YOU'VE DRAWN
ARE IMPRESSIVE FOR ONE SO YOUNG,
BUT THEY WILL FADE WITH TIME. ALL
THINGS DO, AND ALL WE HAVE TO DO
IS WAIT. AND WE ARE THE VERY BEST
AT WAITING. WHILE WE WAIT THOUGH,
WE WOULD WATCH YOU DIE. WHETHER
FROM AGE AND TIME OR FROM THE
WORST THINGS THAT ARE COMING TO
THIS PLACE, THINGS YOU CANNOT EVEN
IMAGINE. ALL THIS SPLENDOR. ALL OF
THIS BEAUTY GROUND TO ASH AND
BLOOD. WE WOULD GIVE YOU ALL OF
THIS LAND TO KEEP FOR US! OR WE*

(cont'd)

*COULD GIVE WHAT WAS LEFT OF YOU TO
THIS LAND, AND JUST WAIT FOR
ANOTHER LIKE YOU TO COME. IT MIGHT
BE A WHILE, BUT AS I SAID WE ARE
VERY GOOD WITH WAITING. BUT KNOW
WE WILL NOT OFFER AGAIN!*

DOOLEY BEGINS TO SWEAT. SHE TAKES A MOMENT. SHE KNOWS THE BEAST
IS NOT LYING.

DOOLEY

What would I have to do, to live
forever and keep this land?

HORNED HEAD

*COME CLOSER. LET US TALK... OF
MANY THINGS.*

END