

Old Gods of Appalachia
Season 1: Barlo

Episode 7
Doubt

FADE IN:

EXT. MOUNTAIN WOODS OUTSIDE YELLOW OAK, KY- DAY (DEC 26, 1821)

TIMOTHY VANOVER, 27, UNDER-DRESSED AND UNDER-SUPPLIED FOR ANY KIND OF WINTER HUNTING, STRUGGLES TO KEEP THE RIFLE STRAP ON HIS SHOULDER. HE SLOWLY TRUDGES UP A SNOWY MOUNTAIN TRAIL. HE'S BEEN OUT HERE ALL MORNING WITH NOTHING TO SHOW FOR IT.

TIMOTHY VANOVER

(muttering to himself) Damn snow.
Damn cold. I ain't made for this
shit. Why the hell did I ever
leave New York...

UP AHEAD, A FORK IN THE TRAIL IS BARELY VISIBLE THROUGH THE SNOW DRIFTS. **TIMOTHY** STOPS, CONSIDERING.

TIMOTHY VANOVER

Well fuck me bloody. Which one was
it again?

TIMOTHY DEBATES TO HIMSELF, TRYING TO REMEMBER WHICH WAY IS HOME. HE CHOOSES THE LEFT-HAND TRAIL.

CUT TO:

EXT. CLIFF EDGE- CONTINUOUS

TIMOTHY COMING AROUND A BEND IN THE TRAIL. MUTTERING TO HIMSELF AND HEAD BENT, HE DOESN'T SEE THE CLIFF EDGE UNTIL HIS FOOT SLIPS. A SINGLE SHOCKED YELP ESCAPES HIM AS HE FALLS OVER THE EDGE.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CLIFF BASE- CONTINUOUS

BASE OF THE CLIFF. **TIMOTHY** LAYS IN THE SNOW, EYES WIDE, BACK LIKELY BROKEN.

HIS BREATH COMES IN WHEEZING GASPS. HE DOESN'T DARE TRY TO MOVE. HE CLOSES HIS EYES AND PREPARES TO SLEEP HIS LAST.

[HOWLING WINDS OF A BLIZZARD]

[FOOTSTEPS CRUNCHING THROUGH DEEP SNOW]

DAUGHTER DOOLEY (O.S.)

Halloo? Oi there - you! A-Are you dead? You don't look dead. Not yet anyway. Does he smell dead, Bartholomew?

THE MASSIVE SNOUT OF A BEAR COMES INTO VIEW, TENTATIVELY
SNIFFLING NEAR TIMOTHY'S HEAD.

TIMOTHY FLINCHES AT THE NOISE AND SQUEEZES HIS EYES SHUT
TIGHTER. HE GAGS AT THE ANIMAL'S SMELL WHEN HE TRIES TO BREATHE.

BARTHOLOMEW, THE BEAR, NUZZLES TIMOTHY'S HEAD.

TIMOTHY OPENS HIS EYES WIDE AND SEES THE BEAR.

BARTHOLOMEW

[Grunts]

TIMOTHY

*[Tries to scream. The pain in his
body only allows a gasping wheeze
to come out]*

TIMOTHY LOOKS OVER AND SEES A WOMAN STANDING NEAR THE IMPOSSIBLY
HUGE BEAR NAMED BARTHOLOMEW.

DAUGHTER DOOLEY looks roughly 20. Her hair is bundled up under a
woolen hood. A thick scarf wrapped around her shoulders and head
is open only enough to see her mouth, nose, and piercing grey
eyes. There is a fierce, old-world nobility to her, and a
survivor's grace.

DOOLEY THROWS HER HOOD BACK AND SHAKES OUT A LONG MANE OF BRIGHT COPPER HAIR. SHE COMES CLOSER TO TIMOTHY AND BENDS DOWN, USING HER WALKING STAFF FOR BALANCE. SHE ROUGHLY GRABS HIS CHIN, LOOKING INTO HIS EYES.

DAUGHTER DOOLEY

Oh, yer not dead at all, are yeh!
(to *BARTHOLOMEW*) I think we can
move him. Oh! But first...

DOOLEY PULLS A GLASS JAR FROM HER SACHEL AND TIPS IT TO TIMOTHY'S LIPS. HE SWALLOWS, AND IMMEDIATELY BEGINS TO RELAX AS THE PAIN FADES AWAY.

HIS VISION GOES SOFT AROUND THE EDGES. HE WATCHES AS DOOLEY WRESTLES HER HAIR BACK UNDER HER HOOD AND REWRAPS THE SCARF AROUND HER MOUTH.

CUT TO:

EXT. VANOVER CABIN- DAY

DAUGHTER DOOLEY APPROACHES THE CABIN, TOWING TIMOTHY BEHIND HER ON A SLED. **CLARA VANOVER, 26**, BOLTS OUT OF THE FRONT DOOR TOWARD THEM, SOBBING.

CLARA VANOVER

Timothy!!!! Oh, God, is he—is he...?

DAUGHTER DOOLEY

No, ma'am, he ain't dead yet. He nearly would have been, had I not been there when he fell off the side of that cliff, though.

CLARA SOBS HARDER AS SHE LOWERS HERSELF NEXT TO TIMOTHY, CHECKING HIM OVER AND PUTTING HER HANDS ALL OVER HIM.

CLARA

Oh, you stupid, stupid man! I just knew something was wrong when you didn't come home in time for breakfast! What's wrong, baby, where you hurting?

DOOLEY

Your husband landed flat on his back when he fell. I figure his spine took most of the damage. (looks over Clara's figure) Let's get both of you inside, yeah? You look 'bout fit to pop right on the lawn here, missy.

CLARA GETS TO HER FEET SHAKILY, DABBING HER EYES WITH AN EDGE OF HER APRON. STILL WIMPERING AND CRYING, SHE NODS.

CUT TO:

INT. VANOVER CABIN, MAIN ROOM- CONTINUOUS

THE DINING TABLE HAS BEEN MOVED CLOSER TO THE FIREPLACE AND COVERED WITH QUILTS, AND TIMOTHY LAID UPON IT. **CLARA** IS CARRYING A TEA TRAY LADEN WITH A STEAMING EARTHENWARE TEAPOT AND MATCHING MUGS. **DOOLEY** IS IN A CHAIR PULLED UP NEXT TO THE END OF THE TABLE WHERE TIMOTHY'S HEAD LAY. HE IS STILL UNCONSCIOUS.

CLARA

Here you are, miss Dooley.
(handing her a mug of tea)

DOOLEY

Oh thank you kindly. Now, when did you say this healer of yours would be here?

CLARA

Soon, I should think. I had the neighbor go fetch Granny Brown while you were getting Tim settled. We do have a doctor here in Yellow Oak, but he only comes in once every three months. Granny Brown knows her way around an herb or two, so she's the one who does most of the healin' round here.

DOOLEY

That's just as well. I tend to prefer Grannies over *doctors*, anyway.

[KNOCK ON THE DOOR]

CLARA

That must be her!

CLARA OPENS THE DOOR. **DOOLEY** RISES FROM HER CHAIR.

GRANNY BROWN, 77, enters. A short, stocky woman with a wise, wrinkled face and full grey hair in a long plait coiled atop her head.

GRANNY AND **DOOLEY** LOCK EYES. GRANNY'S EYES IMMEDIATELY DROP. SHE CAN PRACTICALLY SMELL THE GREEN ON DAUGHTER DOOLEY, THOUGH SHE HERSELF DOES NOT POSESS MUCH MAGICAL ABILITY.

CLARA

Granny Brown! Thank you so much for coming by so quickly. Won't you come in? This is Miss Dooley. She's the one who returned my Timothy to me.

GRANNY BROWN

Thank you, child. I'm more than happy to lend my humble talents wherever I can. (entering)

Good day, sister.

DOOLEY

Greetings, sister. Clara tells me you're the healer in these parts, yes? Please, come have a look at our patient here.

GRANNY BROWN CROSSES TO THE TABLE, NEVER LOOKING DOOLEY DIRECTLY IN THE EYE. SHE KEEPS A RESPECTFUL DISTANCE AS SHE LOOKS TIMOTHY OVER. DOOLEY STEPS AWAY FROM THE TABLE SO GRANNY CAN BETTER ASSESS HIM.

GRANNY BROWN

Clara child, could I trouble you for an Irish coffee? Its bitin' cold out, and it was quite the walk here.

CLARA

(slightly surprised) Ah, of course, Granny, though I'll have to set another pot to boil.

(cont'd)

Timothy usually makes his own coffee—I don't touch the stuff.

GRANNY BROWN

(waving her off) Not a problem, sugar. I'll need more hot water anyway for steepin'.

CLARA EXITS TO THE KITCHEN.

GRANNY BROWN

(still not meeting Dooley's eye)
I've seen you before, Sister. Deep in that holler of yours. My deepest apologies if I crossed any of your lines; I'll make sure not to stray that far into the Green again.

DOOLEY

The apology is appreciated, but not necessary. No lines were crossed. Now, you think you can handle as much healing as this boy needs?

GRANNY CONTEMPLATES TIMOTHY. SHE FEELS ALONG HIS SIDES, HIS NECK, HIS HIPS.

GRANNY BROWN

It's a difficult one, to be sure.
Poor boy's got more hair than
sense, I can tell you. But I can
manage.

CLARA RETURNS FROM THE KITCHEN

CLARA

I've got that coffee brewin' for
you, Granny.

DOOLEY

Well, I oughta be going now. I'll
just leave you and Timothy in
Granny Brown's hands from here on,
Clara. Thank you for the tea. Good
day, Sister.

CLARA

Going? You mean you can't stay?
I'd love to fix up a meal for you.
It's the least I can do.

DOOLEY

T'wasn't a problem at all, helping
a poor lost soul out in the cold.
I'm just glad we got him back to
you, safe and sound. And as
tempting as a home-cooked meal
sounds, I really should be going.
You take care of that man of
yours, okay?

DAUGHTER DOOLEY SAYS HER FINAL GOODBYES AND SEES HERSELF OUT.
CLARA AND **GRANNY** HUDDLE CLOSE AROUND TIMOTHY, GRANNY BEGINNING
HER MINISTRATIONS.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

EXT. DOOLEY'S HOME, THE FRONT PORCH- EVENING

THE SHACK THAT ONCE STOOD IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS HOLLER HAS
EXPANDED OVER THE NEAR-50 YEARS SINCE DAUGHTER DOOLEY WAS
ABANDONED HERE. NOW THERE ARE SEVERAL LARGE ADDITIONS—A BEDROOM,
LIVING ROOM, KITCHEN, OUTHOUSE, ETC. BUT THE ORIGINAL SHACK,
WITH ITS ROTTING WOOD AND OLD IRON NAILS, REMAINS AT THE HEART
OF THIS HOME. IT IS NOW DAUGHTER DOOLEY'S MOST SACRED SPACE.

DAUGHTER DOOLEY IS SIPPING A HOT TODDY IN A ROCKING CHAIR ON HER
PORCH, WATCHING THE HOLLER DARKEN.

THE SIX MEN ARRIVE AT THE EDGE OF HER LINES THROUGH THE TREES. THE YOUNGEST OF THE SIX DRIVES A WAGON BEHIND HIS BRETHREN. THE WAGON IS PULLED BY A COAL-BLACK DRAFT HORSE.

THE SIX MEN were a gift from **HORNED HEAD** not long after she made the pact with It. Dull of eye and slack of jaw, they are more zombie than anything. They do not speak, nor anything else, unless expressly commanded.

DOOLEY

Oh, there you boys are. I was beginning to wonder if ye'd wandered off somewhere and gotten stuck. That's quite the beast you got there, Sixie! Going on holiday?

THE FIRST MAN, THE HANDSOMEST OUT OF THE SIX, STEP OVER THE LINE AND APPROACHES THE PORCH. HE OPENS HIS MOUTH, AND THE VOICE OF HORNED HEAD COMES FORTH FROM IT.

MAN ONE

Good evening, Daughter.

DOOLEY

I've told you once, I've told you a hundred times: do *not* call me that, haint.

MAN ONE

(brief chuckle) This one comes with a message of your next commandment.

DOOLEY

And this one is about ready to sew *that* one's mouth shut if It doesn't get on with it.

MAN ONE

You are to go to the town of Last Harbor, far southeast of this place, and live there amongst its inhabitants for half a year. You will take only what you need-leave all else here. Once arrived, you shall watch and observe.

DOOLEY

Watch and observe what, exactly?

MAN ONE

You will present yourself as a young midwife and herb woman. You will tell them you lost your

(cont'd)

husband in a flood last year and now have no place to go. They will agree to let you stay, and they will neither question nor harm you. You will wait, and watch, until I send notice of what you are to do next.

DOOLEY

(trying to contain her excitement of living amongst people again)
Very well. I'll get to packing immediately. Anything else?

MAN ONE CLOSSES HIS MOUTH AND RETURNS BEHIND THE LINE TO STAND WITH THE REST OF THE SIX MEN.

DOOLEY WATCHES UNTIL SHE IS FAIRLY SURE THE PRESENCE OF HORNED HEAD HAS LEFT THE MEN, THEN NEARLY LEAPS FROM HER ROCKING CHAIR TO GO INSIDE HER HOUSE TO PACK.

END

