

The Key of Danu

Nocturnum Season 4 Episode 20

The cast gets spit out into a 'familiar-feeling' forest, and note that Drake is no longer with them. Heading towards the sounds of battle off in the forest, they see a young, Gifted woman fighting cloaked figures in a complex of standing stones. Anita notes that she fights like a Slayer. They leap into action, helping to dispatch the figures, who, it turns out, are vampires. The young woman turns to address them with a soft Irish brogue, and to their shock, they recognize her.

It's Katherine, Drake's beloved. Suddenly they realize they've landed in Ireland in the seventeenth century.

As they talk to Katherine and try to figure out what to tell her, if anything, the sound of a horse riding at full gallop reaches their ears, and out of the woods comes a familiar face: Drake, on horseback. He no longer feels Gifted to them. He pulls his horse up to a stop and demands to know who they are and what they're doing with his lady. John and Anita suddenly realize why the place looks familiar. They've both been here before, but in the twenty-first century. They're on Drake's ancestral lands, and the man before them isn't the Drake they know. It's Alexander Tudor, better known as Draco...before he was turned into a vampire.

Katherine explains that the Cast are apparently great demon hunters and that they assisted her, and Drake apologizes for his ignorance and insists they join him at his castle for a meal and that they take their rest there that night. They agree.

Over dinner, Drake explains that a vampiric cult has sprung up on his lands, and that young girls have been disappearing from the village. Katherine and he suspect that the cult is trying to raise an ancient Celtic demon, but they've been unable to root out the leaders of the cult, and they fear that if something isn't done soon, Drake will have an uprising on his hands. He's already lost quite a few good men fighting the demons, and worries about his dwindling resources. The Cast agree to do what they can to help, but inform Drake that they're on an important Quest, which is secret, the details not in their power to reveal, but upon which the fate of the entire world rests. He says that somehow, they feel familiar to him, and he promises all his resources to help them in their Quest, if they promise to help him.

They discuss briefly, and agree.

John's amulet seems to pull the Cast to the four different points of Drake's land simultaneously. Investigating the first point of land, they find hidden beneath a tombstone a spear which seems to constantly be dripping blood and the tip of which is red-hot. Klaus identifies it as the spear of Dagda, one of the Four Hallows of Ireland, specifically designed to combat a powerful ancient Celtic demon, and possessed of the ability to return to the hand of the wielder whenever thrown, and to launch lightning or fire attacks. John carries it with him.

At the second corner, they find a magical stone which they identify as the Stone of Destiny, a massive square slab of rock said to identify the true King of Ireland whenever he sits upon it. Matthew tries it; he's not the King.

At the third corner they find themselves at the shore of a small lake. The amulet seems to draw them into the center of the lake. They debate how to proceed, when Anita simply dives in. At the bottom of the lake, in the center, she sees what appears to be a scabbard, gleaming with gold, and inscribed with the word *Caledfwlch*, which Anita can anglicize to "Caliburn." Also on the scabbard are two phrases which translate to "Take me up," and "Cast me away."

There is no sword in the scabbard, and when Anita tries to grab it, her hand passes through.

She returns to the shore and informs the Cast of what's down there. They debate ideas, and are about to give up, when Matthew draws his sword, explains that it was a gift from his Mother and is the sword carried by Charlemagne, blessed by Michele. He then says every gift requires a sacrifice, and before anyone can stop him, hurls the sword into the lake.

A gleaming white feminine hand, clad in a sleeve of iridescent gossamer emerges and catches his sword, drawing it beneath the water's surface. Moments later, the hand emerges, hurling the sword back to Matthew, now encased in the scabbard. He thanks her for the gift, and turns to the Cast.

"Well," he says, "I've got Excalibur. What next?"

The fourth corner of the property reveals, hidden beneath a standing stone, a deep cauldron which bears within it a sheath that seems custom made for the spear. John takes the sheath and straps the spear to his back. Once he does this, the cast smell stew from inside the cauldron. They dip a nearby ladle into the apparently empty basin, and it comes out full of piping hot stew. They sit down, pulling mess kits out of their travel gear, and eat. The cauldron, they identify as the Cauldron of Lugh, which supposedly has the power to bring back the dead, and to be ever full whenever food is needed. They realize that they have now found the Four Hallows of Ireland on Drake's property.

Now the amulet insists that the standing stones where they currently sit are the location of the Key, but it is nowhere to be found. Since the reading is faint, Anita reasons that perhaps the Key was here and no longer is, or that the key will be here soon. The Cast go back to Drake's to get reinforcements, believing that the Key is in the hands of the cult, and return at dusk to find a ritual in place. A young girl is strapped to the altar at the center of the stones, and is about to be sacrificed. The Cast, along with Drake, Katherine, and Drake's men, leap into action and the battle is joined. Klaus uses his reshaping skills to leap over the throng and stop the cult leader from sacrificing the girl. Matthew makes his way back to assist, but they know they won't get there in time to stop him from sacrificing the girl.

Suddenly, there's a swell of Essence, the high priest staggers backwards, confused, and the register of gunfire rings out. They turn to see Anita holding her smoking gun. Klaus and Matthew dispatch the cult leader while the rest of the Cast mop up the vampires. Anita unravels the soul of the evil man, destroying him utterly.

"So much for staying low key in primitive societies," John mutters.

On the body of the dead cult leader, they find the key they seek: the Key of Danu. They now have all four Keys. As Drake and Katherine take the girl back to his castle to be cared for, the Cast say their goodbyes, and John activates his amulet a final time. The vortex forms around them, and they fall out of the sky into what appears to be an alley in the Middle East. The lingering aura of ambient Taint fills the air, mixing with Essence, and they hear explosions off in the distance. They creep to the mouth of the alley, and John, having served in the Middle East, identifies this as Riyadh, the capitol of Saudi Arabia.

"Congratulations," a voice says from behind them. They spin and find themselves face-to-face with a beautiful, Gifted (and powerful) Middle Eastern woman.

"Welcome back to 2025. I am Nena, daughter of Isis. Michele regrets she cannot be here herself, but I've been sent to help you on the next stage of your journey."

QUOTES AND GREAT MOMENTS

(Re: John)

"I'm going to kill him." Anita

"Please do." Matthew

"You can hurt him more than me." Anita

"You can go *poof!* (makes motion of Anita pushing soul out of body) and I'll go *fling!* (makes motion of decapitation)"
Matthew

"We don't allow those in need of help to go without it." Matthew

"Especially when there's an attractive woman involved." Anita

"I'm flattered but...I'm spoken for." Katherine

"So am I." Matthew

"We could offer someone up as bait." Anita

"But...we don't have any virgins." Matthew

"Right...because vampires have a frigging virgin detector!" Anita

"My compliments to Dagda" John

"That's my girl!" Matthew (as he sees Anita drop the evil necromancer)

Anita unravels the evil necromancer's soul.