



Van Helsing Showrunner Talks Finale, Season 2 Expectations

Van Helsing showrunner Neil LaBute discusses the season one finale and what fans can expect in season two.



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With the **Van Helsing** season one finale nearly here, showrunner Neil LaBute laid out some of what fans can

expect from this week's episode "It Begins," and next fall when the show returns to continue its unique twist on a search for self during a vampire apocalypse.

In a telephone interview with **Den of Geek**, LaBute said he wants to continue to leave space for the writing team to grow as storytellers and not box themselves in by revealing too much too soon.

As details surrounding events leading up to the re-emergence of vampires steadily appear, one nagging question about Vanessa's backstory persists. She's not the daughter of Abraham, but she's from that lineage.

"We put her on two lines of discovery in season one, one of which was to try to figure out who she is," LaBute said. "She wakes up in this place, she doesn't know what's going on, and her daughter is missing. She continues on that quest even though it looks hopeless that she might be alive."

LaBute explains that Vanessa's also been forced to examine not only the psychological side of coping with these changes, but her emotional reaction as well.

"She's garnered bit of information along the way, but more of that will come in the finale," he said. "As season two develops, we have made plans for laying out a little more properly what the lineage is that leads to how she got here and into this place of being a vampire killer."

And considering Vanessa's been reluctant to accept her abilities since they impede her goal of finding her daughter, it should be interesting to see where the **Van Helsing** writing team takes viewers in season two.



While the human reaction has been fascinating to watch, it's the vampire coalition vying for control of Vanessa and her abilities that brings another compelling facet to the show. "She [Vanessa] and Dmitri will certainly spend some time talking in the next episode about her background, a bit more history of the vampires themselves, and what they're hoping for," he said.

Though at its heart, **Van Helsing** remains a horror tale, and the writers have steadfastly refused to play into easy tropes and lazy narrative devices.

“One thing we tried not to do is the traditional jump scares; open a closet and out comes the cat,” he said. “We tried to steer clear of any of those things and earn anything that we got. We want these things to fall within the rules of possibility. Probability may be out the window in a world like this, so that can allow the viewer to engage in the show by letting down your guard and say I’m going to go with this.”

One of the issues fans of serious serialized genre television have had to accept over the last few years is that no character is totally secure. That’s been the case on **Van Helsing** as well, and as integral a role as Kelly Overton plays with her portrayal of Vanessa, some fans have prepared themselves that even she might not be safe. Like it or not, showrunners must consider fan reaction. “It’s a really interesting thing to be a part of. I haven’t really been a part of that before. And I think the fans in this world, in genre and sci fi, are very vocal, very smart, very dedicated to their shows, and can enjoy the twists and turns,” he said.

“But of course when you become connected to people, you have an investment in them, and you hate when someone is actually lost. But that means job well done in the writers’ room. It means you created a character that we cared about. You have to want to see what happens to them, and that investment becomes a connection that’s very strong. And we’ve lost some really cool people along the way. Are they all gone for sure? Because of the unique abilities that Vanessa has, if we lose somebody

over to the side of the vampires, that doesn't necessarily mean that's the end of them."

Of course, moving toward the finale and ultimately season two, Vanessa's abilities create a wealth of opportunities for the writers.

"We've been tearing down the people that Vanessa can count on to just herself in this final episode. Part of the fun is bringing in another group of people that hopefully the audience will connect to," he said.

Though fans of the show should expect some new characters, he said no one has been cast yet: "We hope to bring in some additional cast members that people might recognize from the world of acting or elsewhere."

Taking the show into its season finale "It Begins," LaBute teased that "part of the direction of Vanessa's search will change because she's been forced to make some decisions in the last episode."

He continued: "I think there will be some surprises both good and bad from an audience standpoint. It was hard to kill off a couple of people that we saw really blossom as actors; they really breathe life into these characters. Kelly is magnetic in a way that another actress doesn't draw me to them in the same way."

The season one finale of Van Helsing airs 10:00 PM ET Friday December 9 on Syfy.