

TEARDROP

by

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EXT. FOREST - MIDNIGHT

We follow a man, IVAN (35), stumbling and tripping his way through a thick forest. Drenched and bloody, unseen voices call to him, rasping from above:

VOICES

You're a bad man Ivan Dragovich...  
(echoing all around)  
A bad, wicked man...

IVAN

(afraid)  
Leave me alone!

THUMP! As Ivan accidentally runs straight into a tree, poleaxing himself... the midnight sun now streaking across his rugged, dashing face.

IVAN (CONT'D)

(massive  
understatement)  
Ow...

Suddenly a CROW starts to peck at his fingers, stabbing at the JEWELLED RING on his right hand.

IVAN (CONT'D)

OW! Bugger off!

Another peck.

IVAN (CONT'D)

(shooing it away)  
I said BUGGER OFF!

But the crow won't, instead it hops onto Ivan's chest, beak protruding like a knife, as the voices start again:

VOICES/CROW

You're going to destroy the  
world...

Suddenly Ivan lashes out, knocking the bird away. He staggers to his feet, coming to a small clearing...

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - CONTINUOUS

Towards a LOG CABIN...

EXT. LOG CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Ivan twists the door handle...

INT. LOG CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Finally crashing inside... but as he steadies himself he's whacked on the head with a FRYING PAN! CLANK!

And backing away is a woman, NATALIA (25), ragged and afraid, like some midnight Cinderella.

IVAN  
(about to cry)  
That really hurt...

But the voices sound once more...

VOICES  
You're a bad man Ivan Dragovich...

IVAN  
(looking around)  
Oh bloody shut up!

He turns back to Natalia, realizing he sounds crazy...

IVAN (CONT'D)  
No, I'm not mad, it's the voices.  
Can't you hear the...

But he collapses...

And as he looks in her eyes he realizes she's without doubt one of the most beautiful women he's ever seen.

FADE TO BLACK.

SUPER OVER BLACK: ONCE UPON A TIME...

FADE IN:

INT. LOG CABIN - DAY

Spartan in the extreme. A table and chairs, a bed, a stove, a basin, a dresser.

Ivan sits bolt upright in bed, THICK BANDAGES now swamping his head and chest. Natalia keeps a safe distance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

IVAN  
(with total  
confusion)  
Who are you?

Natalia doesn't answer...

IVAN (CONT'D)  
(scanning around)  
Where am I?

Still no answer...

IVAN (CONT'D)  
Are you deaf?

She shakes her head.

IVAN (CONT'D)  
Dumb?

She's getting a little annoyed now...

IVAN (CONT'D)  
Simple?

Natalia vigorously points to the DOOR.

IVAN (CONT'D)  
You want me to leave?

She nods, opening the door, LIGHT searing in.

IVAN (CONT'D)  
What if I don't want to..?

Natalia furiously writes something down, handing him a piece of paper. It reads:

GET OUT!

She picks up her frying pan, emphasizing her point.

IVAN (CONT'D)  
You know it might not be safe for  
me out there...

But Natalia's unmoved, tossing Ivan his shirt, watching him like a hawk as he edges to the door... but suddenly he turns, grabbing her wrist, and they start to wrestle.

And it's a comic scene:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Natalia kneeling Ivan in the balls, he grimacing in pain, as they fumble around, shifting dangerously close to her STOVE... until she finally drops her weapon, letting out a small YELP!

IVAN (CONT'D)  
(guilty)  
Sorry...

But Natalia presses a finger to her lips, listening for something, and then as if from the bowels of Hell itself, a weird CORPOREAL CACKLE sounds all around.

NATALIA  
(depressed)  
Oh that's just great...

IVAN  
(unnerved)  
What was that?

Natalia sits down, nursing her hand.

NATALIA  
Him...

IVAN  
Him?  
(realizing)  
Hang on, you can talk?

She gives him a 'no shit Sherlock' smile.

NATALIA  
And by the way thank you so much for single handedly alerting THEM to my presence... and in all probability being directly responsible for the end of the world!

IVAN  
The end of the world..?

NATALIA  
You'll see...

IVAN  
(humoring her)  
Look I'm sorry, I didn't know. Maybe 'They' didn't hear?

She looks at him like he's a moron.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

IVAN (CONT'D)

Wait a minute, who are 'They'? You sure you haven't been cooped up in here for too long?

NATALIA

Oh that's right, blame me for everything! You stumble into my house, half dead, with a bullet in your back, which I remove, and in doing so make the mistake of saving your life, and then have the nerve to question my sanity!

IVAN

I just meant...

NATALIA

And perhaps you'd be kind enough to tell me what the hell you're doing here in the first place?

IVAN

I think someone was trying to kill me...

NATALIA

Perhaps you were annoying them?

IVAN

I think I was being chased...

NATALIA

Was that before or after you spoke to the crow?

IVAN

(defensive)

Who said anything about a crow?

NATALIA

You did. You were babbling away, claiming it had it in for you.

IVAN

I must have, I mean, Oh God, I can't remember...

NATALIA

That'll be the curse.

IVAN

Curse?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

NATALIA

Well technically ex-curse. I removed it, and with it, it seems, your memory...

IVAN

Well why did you do that?!

NATALIA

Oh excuse me for having extracted a necromantic curse from your neck!

Ivan instinctively touches his throat, skeptical.

IVAN

Well where is it now?

NATALIA

Gone. Anyway it's invisible. You wouldn't know you had it.

IVAN

That's rather convenient...

NATALIA

Fine, don't believe me! Now I need to pack, so if you wouldn't mind F-ing off...

Natalia turns, starting to gather her things.

IVAN

I don't suppose you could tell me where we are?

NATALIA

Lapland.

IVAN

Lapland? I've heard of that...

NATALIA

(still packing)  
Congratulations.

IVAN

Any reason why?

NATALIA

Let's just say the people after me aren't very fond of sunlight.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

IVAN  
Albinos?

NATALIA  
No, idiot.

IVAN  
Who? Please...

She turns, looking into his eyes.

NATALIA  
Promise this is the last  
conversation we'll ever have.

IVAN  
I promise...

NATALIA  
And that you won't in any way  
chortle, laugh or snicker...

IVAN  
Absolutely...

Natalia takes a deep breath:

NATALIA  
The Vampire King.

IVAN  
(like she's mad)  
The what?

NATALIA  
See. Told you there was no point  
telling you. NOW GO AWAY!

IVAN  
As in Dracula?

NATALIA  
No not as in bloody Dracula!  
(pondering)  
He was last seen shit faced in  
Stalingrad...

Ivan lets out a HUGE spurt of laughter.

IVAN  
You're round the bend!

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED: (6)

NATALIA

(infuriated)

Yup, you laugh away! And when he eats your heart and rips you limb from limb, be sure to give him my regards...

She moves over to the DRESSER, continuing to pack.

IVAN

And if he finds you first..?

NATALIA

(turning/annoyed)

Thought I'd explained this. It's the end of the world.

IVAN

(genuine)

Any particular reason why?  
(before she can bite  
his head off)

Please...

Natalia finally relents.

NATALIA

(somewhat snooty)

I guess you could say my parents are fairly well known.

IVAN

(hopeful)

They're actors?

NATALIA

No!

(rather proud)

Mother's well, Mother Nature. As for father, he's the Great Creator...

IVAN

Great Creator? As in..?

NATALIA

Yup. The All Seeing.

(recollecting)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (7)

NATALIA (CONT'D)

They married young and were  
hopelessly in love, until one  
fateful weekend Father had to go  
away...

CUT TO FLASHBACK:

EXT. SECRET GARDEN - HEAVEN - DAY

A rather pregnant MOTHER NATURE (40's), an elegant lady,  
is strolling through a summer garden, when she spies a  
SINGLE CRIMSON APPLE hanging from a tree.

Transfixed, she glances around to make sure no one's  
watching, then plucks the apple, closes her eyes, and  
takes a modest bite...

CRACK! As a RAUCOUS RED DEMON appears. Mother Nature  
drops the apple and falls to her knees in despair, the  
demon now pointing a bony finger to the ground.

NATALIA (V.O.)

Where upon Mother was cursed and  
banished to earth, forced to live  
out the rest of her days in  
hiding...

EXT. CAVE - EARTH - NIGHT

Mother Nature tries to shelter her TWO WAILING BABY  
DAUGHTERS from a howling gale.

NATALIA (V.O.)

To make matters worse the curse  
stipulated that should both  
daughters be slain by the same  
hand then Mother's beloved earth  
would be plunged into eternal  
darkness...

CUT BACK TO  
PRESENT:

INT. LOG CABIN - DAY

Natalia continues:

NATALIA

And we've been on the run ever  
since.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NATALIA (CONT'D)

Well I have anyway, Mother was murdered when we were teenagers, and the Vampire King slaughtered my sister during the French Revolution. So seeing as he got first blood, if he kills me, it's all over.

IVAN

I see...

NATALIA

One more thing. If I get to five thousand years then the curse is broken. Which would have been in three days time, not that I'd want to guilt trip you or anything...

IVAN

Five thousand years..?

NATALIA

Yup. Round about the same time Father lost all faith in humanity.

(melancholy)

Powerless to contravene nature's ancient laws the poor man spiralled into depression, and barely anyone's seen Him since. According to mother He was so devastated by the whole shocking affair He shut himself off, claiming love was dead, seeking solace in classical music poetry...

Ivan's speechless.

NATALIA (CONT'D)

Oh and did I mention that my tears give life?

IVAN

No...

NATALIA

Well they do.

Natalia smiles disingenuously...

NATALIA (CONT'D)

You're still here...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

IVAN

No I'm definitely leaving.  
(realizing he's still  
lost)  
Any idea which way's civilization?

NATALIA

If by civilization you mean  
people, try south. Though watch  
out for Nazis...

IVAN

(clueless)  
Nazis?

NATALIA

Yes. And psychopathic Communists.

IVAN

Right...  
(smiling sweetly)  
Far?

NATALIA

Few thousand miles. But don't  
worry I'm sure there's a bus stop  
nearby. Or I know, why don't you  
get your friend the crow to fly  
you home..?

IVAN

You know you're very sarcastic...

NATALIA

Hilarious.

IVAN

Well all the best. Hope they don't  
catch you.

NATALIA

Hope the memory comes back...

IVAN

(stopping)  
Oh by the way, what's your name?

NATALIA

None of your business.

IVAN

Thought so...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

NATALIA

According to the crow yours is  
Ivan.

Ivan nods, repeating it, heading to the door.

NATALIA (CONT'D)

Natalia...

He turns.

NATALIA (CONT'D)

My name's Natalia.

IVAN

Sounds human?

NATALIA

Not my real name of course, I've  
been incognito for years... but  
Russian names are so romantic  
don't you think?

Ivan's about to say something, but doesn't, finally  
leaving.

EXT. LOG CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Ivan shakes his head as the door is firmly shut.

IVAN

Completely and utterly crackers.

EXT. FOREST TREE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Ivan undoes his trousers and starts to pee. Bliss.

VLAD (O.S.)

(shocked delight)

BROTHER..?!

Ivan turns, to see his OLDER BROTHER VLAD (37), grinning  
sadistically at him.

VLAD (CONT'D)

My God! We thought you were dead!  
Don't worry, Molotov was punished  
for his stupidity!

INSERT CUT: We see Vlad shooting Molotov DEAD.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Ivan smiles, unable to hide his confusion.

VLAD (CONT'D)

Do you not recall brother..? You  
were picking mushrooms, when  
Molotov mistook you for a deer and  
shot you!

Close on Ivan, trying to remember... suddenly there's a  
SHOUT from outside. TWO thick-necked BRUTES have found  
something.

BRUTE (O.S.)

Over here!

Vlad and Ivan turn...

EXT. LOG CABIN - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Vlad kicks the door in, Ivan's heart now pounding.

INT. LOG CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Vlad glances around. Blood stains spatter the floor.

VLAD

So this is where you've been  
hiding! You old fox!

Vlad wanders towards the stove...

VLAD (CONT'D)

Tell me brother, who healed you?  
(inspecting a mug)  
Assuming you didn't pluck the  
bullet out yourself.

IVAN

I...

But Vlad's seen something, a long silky strand of HAIR.  
He picks it up and turns, dangling it in front of Ivan.

VLAD

(rather impressed)  
Is there something you're not  
telling me brother?

IVAN

Well...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VLAD

(pompous idiot)

Of course I understand. Barely a day passes without your stallion leaving its stable! Ha!

(sly)

But we haven't been sent all this way just so you may ravish women...

(grinning)

We've been sent here to CAPTURE one!

IVAN

(shocked/bluffing)

I was recovering. Biding my time...

VLAD

Of course you were!

(serious)

Where is she?

An unsettling moment, Vlad's murderous eyes fixed on Ivan...

IVAN

(feigned anger)

She was tied up in the corner! She must have escaped!

BRUTE (O.S.)

Over here! We've got her!

The brothers turn. Vlad rushes outside, Ivan behind...

EXT. LOG CABIN - CONTINUOUS

...to see Natalia being dragged towards them by FIVE THUGS. Vlad smiles in delight, marching towards her.

VLAD

(highly amused)

I see my brother's been having his wicked way with you...

Natalia slaps him, before turning at Ivan, appalled.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NATALIA

And to think I thought you were  
just some harmless idiot on the  
run! You disgusting, crow-loving,  
coward!

Vlad grabs her neck, jerking her forward, inspecting her  
small, eye shaped, 'God' mark.

VLAD

(pleased as punch)  
Truss up the minx!

The heavy mob start to bind Natalia's hands and feet.

VLAD (CONT'D)

Father will be most pleased. Now  
we can have anything we want!

Vlad whacks his brother heartily on the back, Ivan's  
guilt ridden eyes secretly turning towards Natalia...

FADE OUT.

SUPER OVER BLACK: A DAY AND A HALF LATER...

FADE IN:

EXT. TRANSYLVANIAN CASTLE - LATE NIGHT

A Gothic horror. Gargoyles, towers, a moat, mountain  
crags fracturing the horizon. In fact all that's missing  
is Dracula...

INT. GOTHIC STUDY - CONTINUOUS

Instead we meet DRAGOMIR (58), a wicked, conniving,  
tyrant of a man... counting a huge mound of cash.

A knock at the door. His eyes flick up.

HENCHMAN

Your sons are here my Lord.

A smile spoils Dragomir's lips.

EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

The brother's truck thunders in, finally grinding to a  
halt. The doors spring open, Vlad jumps down.

(CONTINUED)



CONTINUED:

VLAD  
(reverential)  
Father.

Dragomir nods, now posing in his magician's cloak.

DRAGOMIR  
I trust you have something for  
me..?

VLAD  
Indeed father.  
(shouting)  
Bring her here!

The truck is opened, and Natalia's carried and presented  
to Dragomir.

NATALIA  
(total contempt)  
And what ghastly low life may you  
be?

DRAGOMIR  
Dragomir Dragovich, entrepreneur  
and purveyor of the dark arts...

NATALIA  
(dismissive)  
Mercenary and town hall conjurer  
more like!  
(scornful)  
I assume your plan is to sell me  
to the Vampire King?

DRAGOMIR  
Naturally...

NATALIA  
Then you're even more moronic than  
you look, as there won't be a  
world for you to live in!

DRAGOMIR  
You really do have a very high  
opinion of yourself, seeing as the  
tainted stock you're from...

NATALIA  
How dare you! My parents are  
beyond reproach!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DRAGOMIR  
 (slightly surprised)  
 Not entirely true my dear...  
 (rather delighted)  
 My goodness, you really don't  
 know...

NATALIA  
 (disconcerted)  
 Don't know what..?

DRAGOMIR  
 (cunning)  
 Oh nothing...  
 (sinister)  
 Nothing at all...  
 (sharp)  
 Take her away!

Three guards carry Natalia towards the MAIN DOORS.

DRAGOMIR (CONT'D)  
 (to Vlad)  
 Where is Ivan?

Vlad turns, to see Ivan standing near the truck.

DRAGOMIR (CONT'D)  
 (favouring him)  
 Closer my boy...

Vlad watches, burning with envy, as Ivan approaches...

...but as he gets closer Dragomir's FACE, TEETH, and EYES  
 fracture Ivan's mind with memories.

Something's VERY WRONG.

Then a vicious smile erupts from Dragomir, and he  
 embraces Ivan, a BLACK PENTAGRAM hanging from his neck.

DRAGOMIR (CONT'D)  
 Come!

They wander past an excruciatingly vain, self  
 commissioned STATUE of Dragomir.

Nearby we see an array of sad creatures being dragged in  
 chains to the DUNGEONS below.

UNICORNS, FAIRIES, ELVES... Dragomir's trade.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DRAGOMIR (CONT'D)  
 (glancing at them)  
 Should fetch a pretty price.

INT. GREAT HALL - CONTINUOUS

A roaring fire, faded medieval tapestries, the heads of animals fastened high to the walls. There are more guards, granite hard Slavic faces, and chained to the far wall are two Bullmastiffs, baying for blood, as a haunch of meat is tossed over.

Dragomir settles into an ornate throne opposite the fire place as Natalia is held gagged in the corner.

DRAGOMIR  
 Our guests shall soon be here.  
 Someone fetch me my spectacles...

VLAD  
 (eager to please)  
 Allow me father.

DRAGOMIR  
 (testing)  
 No, Ivan shall get them. They are  
 in my study.

Dragomir fixes his eyes on him. Watching with microscopic interest...

IVAN  
 (after a moment)  
 Of course... father.

Ivan turns, but there are THREE doors ahead. Everyone now watching as he heads to the door on the far left... praying it doesn't lead into a cupboard.

Ivan twists the handle, revealing a long hallway with a staircase at the end. He walks through.

CLOSE on Dragomir and Vlad.

VLAD  
 (almost concerned)  
 He is not himself father.

DRAGOMIR  
 Indeed...  
 (cunning)  
 Tell me, who shot him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VLAD

Molotov father, an accident.

DRAGOMIR

(entertained)

Do not think me a fool Vladimir,  
you tried to kill your brother but  
failed!

VLAD

(floundering)

Father, I...

Then a flash of steel in Dragomir's eyes.

DRAGOMIR

Take some men and lock Ivan in the  
dungeons, your brother is  
bewitched! I shall return his  
senses whence our guests have  
departed!

Vlad nods at Dragomir, before leaving with two guards.  
Dragomir's eyes turn to Natalia.

DRAGOMIR (CONT'D)

Prepare her!

A pair of heavies bundle Natalia from the room.