

NOCTURNE DE LA MORT

by

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INT. SUBURBAN HOME - DAY

SUBTITLE: PRELUDE

LISA (mid 30's) strides down the hall, checks her smartphone. She sighs at a lengthy to do list.

She calls over her shoulder as she reaches the front door.

LISA
Love you. Home later.

She closes the door without waiting for a reply.

INT. MINIVAN - DAY

Lisa checks her phone again as she drives. A few locations have been checked off, but the list is still long.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Lisa fumbles with her keys as she balances too many bags of groceries. She finds the button as she finds her van, and the side door slides open.

Bags tumble out of Lisa's hands into the opening. She turns.

A MASKED FIGURE stands RIGHT BEHIND HER. He places a WHITE CLOTH over her mouth, forces her into the van.

Lisa's world swims out of focus as darkness overtakes her.

INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT

SUBTITLE: INQUIETO

Lisa wakes on a cold floor in a puddle of light. She raises a hand to her head, notices the LEATHER SHACKLE around her wrist. She traces a LEATHER STRAP from the shackle to an UPRIGHT PIANO.

TEACHER (O.S.)
Awake, sleeper, and arise.

Lisa searches the darkness. She sees his mask first, beautifully violent. Her attacker steps full into the light.

TEACHER
We're going to make beautiful music together. Shall we begin?

(CONTINUED)

Lisa scurries away, as far as her restraints will allow.

TEACHER (cont'd)
Come now, Lisa. Time is short.

LISA
How-

TEACHER
- do I know your name? A good
teacher knows his students.

He moves closer, crouches down, lowers his voice.

TEACHER (cont'd)
And I, my dear, am the best.

He stands, moves to the piano. Atop the piano are a stack of
INSTRUCTIONAL BOOKS, a METRONOME, and a DIGITAL TIMER.

TEACHER (cont'd)
Come.

LISA
You're crazy.

TEACHER
Far from it. Crazy is spending
every waking hour running all over
God's creation to satiate a need to
feel busy. Crazy is disregarding
quality time with those we love.
Speaking of which...

He disappears into the darkness. Lisa hears the CLICK of a
light switch. Another pool of light on the far side of the
room reveals a MAN (mid 30's) in a chair, bound and gagged.

LISA
Jason!

TEACHER
A good teacher knows how to
properly motivate his students,
wouldn't you agree?

LISA
Let us go, you crazy fuck!

The teacher bolts toward her and SLAPS her face, hard. Lisa
recoils. The teacher composes himself, walks to the piano,
sets the digital timer. EIGHT HOURS.

(CONTINUED)

TEACHER

You are going to put your life
aside for the next eight hours, and
you are going to make music.

LISA

I don't know how.

TEACHER

Of course you don't. Otherwise, you
wouldn't need me.

LISA

What if I say no?

The teacher produces a STRAIGHT RAZOR.

TEACHER

That would be very unfortunate for
your dear husband.

The teacher starts the timer. Lisa's eyes jump from timer,
to knife, to husband, to piano, to teacher.

TEACHER (cont'd)

Shall we begin?

He extends his hand. Lisa accepts.

INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT

SUBTITLE: AGITATO

MONTAGE

The teacher paces as Lisa fumbles through the beginner's
book, her hands trembling. She glances at the timer.

Lisa makes a mistake. The teacher raps her fingers with the
closed handle of the straight razor.

A frustrated, Lisa folds her hands in her lap. The teacher
hurries toward Jason, blade in hand. Lisa screams. Tears
roll down her cheeks as she begins to play again.

Lisa progresses. One book falls to the floor, finished, then
another, then another. The metronome ticks on.

The teacher sways to Lisa's music as the timer counts down
to zero. Lisa allows herself a small accomplished smile.

(CONTINUED)

TEACHER
You're ready.

The white cloth returns, covers Lisa's face. Darkness.

INT. STAGE - NIGHT

SUBTITLE: CON ANIMA

Smelling salts under Lisa's nose. Her eyes shoot open.

She sits slumped in front of a gorgeous EBONY GRAND PIANO, still restrained. A handwritten composition sits in front of her: NOCTURNE DE LA MORT, FOR PIANO FOUR HANDS.

She raises her eyes, sees Jason, still bound and gagged.

TEACHER (O.S.)
It's time, Lisa.

Lisa turns. The teacher stands over her. In his hands, a DIGITAL RECORDING DEVICE.

TEACHER
No mistakes.

The teacher takes a seat on the bench beside her. He presses the record button. Lisa takes a deep, steadying breath.

They begin.

The music is intricate, melancholic, mesmerizing. His part is complex, hers simple, yet they meld together seamlessly. Lisa is focused, intense. The teacher is lost in the music.

They reach the end of the composition. A moment of silence.

A shudder runs through the teacher. Lisa realizes he's crying. She stifles an insane urge to comfort him.

TEACHER (cont'd)
That was... beautiful.

LISA
Please. Let us go.

TEACHER
Of course.

The teacher stands, walks to Jason, produces the razor. He bends down to cut the ropes, then raises his eyes to look at Lisa from behind his mask. Her eyes meet his.

(CONTINUED)

He slides the razor ACROSS JASON'S THROAT. Blood pulses out of Jason's neck, drenching his shirt.

Lisa wails, cries, curses, struggles against her restraints. The teacher closes his eyes and sways, enraptured.

Jason's eyes find Lisa as his life fades away. Lisa sobs.

The teacher saunters to the piano, picks up the digital recorder, clicks STOP. He disappears into the darkness.

LIGHTS flood the auditorium. Lisa looks down from the stage.

She sees an auditorium. Row after row is filled with CORPSES, throats slit, shirts bloodied. Lisa sees men and women, young and old. She sees grandparents, parents...

Children.

Lisa faints.

INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT

SUBTITLE: CODA

Lisa opens her eyes.

A puddle of light comes into focus on the far side of the room. Lisa sees the teacher, standing by the upright piano.

She tries to move, finds herself bound to a chair. She tries to speak, but the sound is muffled by a gag.

TEACHER

We're going to make beautiful music together.

The teacher is speaking to someone else. He turns on the lights.

RECOGNITION in Lisa's eyes. She SCREAMS against the gag.

A YOUNG GIRL (10) stands at the piano. She peers at Lisa from across the room, terrified.

YOUNG GIRL

Mommy?

TEACHER

Shall we begin?

CUT TO BLACK