

Deliver Us From Evil

by

?

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FADE IN:

TITLE CARD

*'It will be a day of clouds...
all the shining lights in heaven I will darken over you
and will set darkness on your land'*
(Ezek 30.3, 32.8)

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MOTEL - DAY

A deserted carpark fronting a ramshackle motel. GERALD (55), unshaven, unkempt, mesmerized by a storm-front closing in. Banks of clouds swirl overhead. Lightning flashes and thunder rumbles in the distance.

He turns. Something alerts him to:

The eerie quiet, an unnatural stillness, a greenish cast to the light. The birds have stopped singing.

INT. MOTEL RECEPTION - DAY

HENRIK stands behind the reception desk flicking through a newspaper. Tall, bald and old. Bags under his eyes as big as plums. He wears a smiley face badge that declares "Hi! I'm Henrik!"

His eyes rise as Gerald stumbles inside. He limps across the floor carrying an old hold-all.

GERALD
You still open?

HENRIK
We're always open.

GERALD
Just, with the hurricane coming,
everybody leaving...

Henrik smiles, almost too cheery.

HENRIK
You'd like a room?

GERALD
For a few days.

HENRIK
And nights.

Henrik smiles again. Gerald remains stony faced.

MOTEL FLOOR CORRIDOR - LATER

Gerald winces in pain as he makes his way along the hall. He carries his bag and a key for room 362.

INT. ROOM 362

A motel room styled circa 1970's - moth-bitten curtains, flaking wallpaper, mirrored dressing table, single bed. All in need of a good clean. Gerald enters. Locks the door. Throws his bag on the floor, collapses on the bed.

GERALD

Thank god.

He sighs, gets up. Takes off his coat and jumper to reveal he wears a priest's dog collar. He takes it and his shirt off.

A bloodied bandage is taped to his side. He removes it, biting his lip as he does so.

Underneath it a long knife wound, healing but sore looking.

The sound of footsteps in the corridor approach, get louder, closer.

A knock at the door.

He turns to it, stays absolutely still.

Another knock, louder. Gerald breathes in, holds it.

The door handle turns. But the locked door stays shut.

A folded piece of paper appears under the door.

The footsteps walk away.

Gerald holds his position for a moment then tiptoes to the door. He glances through the peephole, sees nothing.

He picks up the note, unfolds it. In red handwriting he reads "We know you're here."

He screws up the note into a ball. Throws it over to the bin, misses. It rolls to a stop in the middle of the floor.

Gerald stares at it for a few seconds, watches as the rolled-up wad of paper spins back towards him, unfurls itself.

Undaunted, he screws the paper up once more, boots it towards the front door.

Rummaging through his bag he pulls out a fresh bandage.

As he applies it the phone rings. He stops, stares at the phone, finishes putting on the bandage. The phone continues to ring.

He picks it up, listens.

DEEP MALE VOICE (O.S)
We know you're here.
(long pause)
Tonight's the night.

GERALD
Who is this? Who are you?

DEEP MALE VOICE (O.S)
We're coming for you.

GERALD
To hell with you.

Gerald slams the phone down.

From his bag he pulls a crumpled shirt, puts it on. Heading for the door, he doubles back to pick up the rolled up note.

LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Henrik glances up from his newspaper as Gerald limps towards him with purpose.

HENRIK
Sir?

GERALD
Don't sir me. Who put that under my door?

He throws the crumpled note at Henrik, who catches it.

GERALD (CONT'D)
And who called me?

Henrik appears the picture of innocence. He unfolds the note.

HENRIK
Called you? I don't know who called you.
(MORE)

HENRIK (CONT'D)
(reads note aloud deadpan)
'We know you're here.'

He shrugs, hands the note back.

HENRIK (CONT'D)
I don't know who sent you that.
Someone who saw you, perhaps.

GERALD
What does that mean?

HENRIK
It means I don't know, sir. Anyone
could have.

GERALD
Anybody know I'm here? Anyone asked
for me?

Henrik shakes his head.

GERALD (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. It's not your fault.

HENRIK
Thank you. Accepted. When was the
call?

GERALD
A few minutes ago, at the most.

HENRIK
An offensive call? If it was, I can
check.

GERALD
Yes. Very.

HENRIK
A moment.

He goes through a doorway out of sight.

Gerald glances around the lobby and out the window. Day now
appears as night, the wind moans and whines, trees bend
wildly, and raindrops the size of pennies thud onto the
asphalt.

Henrik returns.

HENRIK (CONT'D)

My computer tells me the call you got was from an outside line. They called your room direct.

GERALD

They didn't speak to you? You got the number?

Henrik goes back out, returns with a slip of paper. Gerald takes it.

GERALD (CONT'D)

Thanks.

HENRIK

I'm going to close the storm shutters now.

GERALD

Rather you than me.

Gerald heads away as Henrik dons a waterproof coat.

INT. ROOM 362

Gerald enters. Locks the door. He places the slip of paper with the phone number on the dressing table.

He pulls a leather-bound bible from his bag. Opens it. The pages are cut away to house a gun. He takes it out, checks it's loaded.

In the reflection of the mirror he rubs the gun's muzzle against his chin.

He dials a 9 on the phone. The line clicks, then a dialling tone.

He punches in the phone number. It rings. Another sound - a cell phone ringing close by.

He puts the phone receiver, still ringing, on the dressing table, steps to the door, gun in hand. The cell phone ringing gets louder.

He opens the door. Follows the sound across the deserted hall. He listens at door 363 - the ringing is within.

He tries the door - it's open. He goes inside.

ROOM 363

Identical to his own, but ready for a new guest. He follows the sound of the ringing to a drawer, opens it. A cheap plain cellphone buzzes and rings. He picks it up, cancels the call.

Behind him a shadow moves. He whirls around just as-- a baseball bat swings towards him, hits him hard on the head.

He collapses.

ROOM 362 - LATER

The curtains are drawn. Only a table lamp and intermittent flashes of lightning illuminate the room.

Gerald lies face down, unconscious on the bed.

He opens his eyes slowly, brings a hand up to his head.

In the corner of the room in the shadows, a tall figure looms. This is VIC, he of the deep male voice on the phone.

VIC
Awake at last.

Gerald turns to him, squints his eyes to try to focus. Vic stays in the shadows, a hat pulled low over his eyes. He raises his hand. Gerald sees the outline of a gun - his gun. Vic points it at Gerald's head.

Gerald shields his face.

GERALD
Why? I don't even know you.

VIC
Yes you do. You always have.

LOBBY

Gale force winds propel Henrik through the lobby door. Windblown, soaked to the skin, he takes off a dripping waterproof coat.

A booming crack of thunder and lightning. The overhead lights in the lobby flicker on and off, on and off, and finally they die.

Henrik mutters under his breath in the darkness.

Pulls a flashlight from his pocket.

A gunshot rings out.

He looks upward. Then dashes across the lobby.

ROOM 362 - MOMENTS LATER

Henrik bursts in. Gerald lies slumped in a heap on the floor. The gun is near his hand. No sign of Vic.

Henrik checks Gerald's neck for a pulse.

LOBBY - NEXT DAY

Sunlight fills the lobby. Outside a clear blue sky and the twitter of bird song.

Henrik stands at the desk in a smart suit. He still wears his smiley face badge.

Gerald heads for the door with his hold-all. He wears a crisp dark shirt, his dog collar, and carries his bible.

HENRIK

Goodbye sir.

Gerald almost replies but stops himself.

When he reaches the door he lowers his head, mutters to himself in a deep male voice... just like Vic's.

Pulling a black fedora hat over his head, he adjusts the brim low over his eyes, turns back to give Henrik one last look, and tips his hat.

GERALD

Goodbye.

FADE OUT.