

(Printed with the demonstration version of Fade In)

An Original Short Film

A BOUQUET OF DEAD ROSES

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1 **OVER BLACK SCREEN...**

1

A SERIES OF INSTAGRAM PICTURES (x8), all of them from a Latin, pretty and smily girl. She poses and smiles for every single one of the photos. As the pictures cut in scene one by one every 5 seconds, the voice of a MAN is heard on the background.

MAX (V.O)

Dalila Velazquez. Couldn't there be any other beautiful girl in the world? Your eyes, your skin, your hair, your way of being... Jesus... I love it all. I love how you smile at me. How you stare at me. How you laugh at my jokes. Thank you for making me feel human.

SMASH CUT TO:

2 **INT. DINING ROOM / KITCHEN. NIGHT**

2

SLAM! A DOOR CLOSES NEARBY as we see MAX (29) washing a fork in the sink. As soon as the SLAM is heard, Max stops washing the fork and closes the faucet. He stays still.

DALILA (O.S)

Hello?

Max leaves the fork on the wringer nearby, along another fork, a knife and two white plates. He dries his hands with a cloth and turns around, grinning. From behind a wall, in the ENTRANCE HALL, DALILA (27) shows up, looking for any signs of life in the house. Max waves at her.

MAX

Hi there!

Dalila looks at him and smiles. She's holding a PURSE in her right shoulder. She walks towards him and opens her arms, ready to embrace Max. They both hug.

DALILA

Hiiii!!!

MAX

Welcome, Dalila!

DALILA

Thanks.

They both separate from each other.

MAX

Great! You-- you came right on time!

Max points at a CLOCK hanging from a nearby wall. It marks exactly 21:00 hours. Dalila shrugs.

DALILA

Yeah. I consider myself the kind of girl that likes being right on time.

MAX

Great! Oh, may I take your purse?

Dalila hands him her purse. Max goes to...

3 INT. ENTRANCE HALL. CONTINUOUS.

3

...the ENTRANCE HALL and hangs it on a coat rack. He turns around and sees...

A BOUQUET OF ROSES, resting in a glass jar filled with water. The roses are beautiful, pretty, red.

Max sighs, somehow relieved. He heads to...

4 INT. DINING ROOM / KITCHEN. CONTINUOUS.

4

...the KITCHEN. Delila is sitting on a chair in the dining table. As Max heads to the kitchen:

MAX

Hope you're hungry. I made this exquisite Mac & Cheese.

DELILA

Dude. I've been starving since... since...

Delila tries to remember. But she can't.

DELILA (cont'd)

Meh, since a long time ago.

Max chuckles as he takes out a BOWL filled with mac & cheese out of the microwave and leaves it in the dining table.

DELILA (cont'd)

I noticed the bouquet of roses in the entrance. Are those for me?

MAX

Only if you make it through until 10.

DELILA

Why shouldn't I make it through until 10? It's barely 9!

MAX

In case you end up hating me and getting the fuck out of here.

DELILA

Believe me. I'm just staying for the Mac & Cheese.

Both Max and Delila laugh.

5 INT. DINING ROOM / KITCHEN. 15 MINUTES LATER

5

C.U: THE CLOCK ON THE WALL. It marks 21:15 hours.

On the dining table, Max and Delila are eating Mac & Cheese on two white plates, using one fork each one.

MAX

Are they good?

DELILA

The food, great. The presentation, could be better.

MAX

Sorry, I had to... improvise at last moment. I wanted to make chicken, but let's say I fucked up.

DELILA

Nah, it's fine. I mean, this ain't a restaurant. But sure this ain't a way to impress a girl.

MAX

For a man like me... it is.

Delila chuckles as she bites some Mac & Cheese with her teeth, until--

She suddenly jumps and makes a painful gesture.

DELILA

(With her mouth full)

Ah, fuck...

MAX

Are you OK?

DELILA

I bited my lip. Ah, shit.

She takes a napkin next to her plate and brings it to her lips.

DELILA (cont'd)

I think I'm bleeding. May I use your bathroom?

MAX

Sure, uh... Want some help?

DELILA

Nah, I'm good. I'll be right back. Gimme 2 minutes.

MAX

It's... uh... all the way down the hallway to the left.

Delila stands up, with the napkin in her lips, and hurries to the hallway. Max stays seated in the dining table. He sighs, furious.

MAX (cont'd)

(Low voice)

Fuck!

6 INT. BATHROOM. CONTINUOUS.

6

Delila is in front of the mirror, standing inside the BATHROOM. She pukes the chewed Mac & Cheese from her mouth, mixed with saliva and blood into the napkin. With her right hand, she lowers down her lower lip, noticing a tiny red wound on it. Nothing serious.

DELILA

Dammit.

Delila drinks some water from the faucet. She swishes and spits it out. Realizing she's still holding the napkin, she leans down under the sink and sees a closed SILVER TRASH CAN. After stepping on the pedal, the lid opens, revealing...

...several wrinkled napkins with chewed rests of food. Delila stares at them for a while, confused.

But ignores it and tosses her napkin to the trash. Then, she takes her foot off the pedal and the lid closes.

7 INT. HALLWAY. CONTINUOUS.

7

Delila exits the bathroom, closing the door behind her. As she walks away, we notice a SECOND DOOR at the right wall (at Delila's left). As she passes by, she stops. Sniffs something. A smell... a stench.

She makes a disgusted face as she walks away from that door.

8 INT. LIVING ROOM. 12 MINUTES LATER.

8

C.U: THE CLOCK ON THE WALL. It marks 21:30 hours.

MAX (O.S)
C'mon, c'mon...

DELILA (O.S)
(Chuckling)
I'm gonna fucking choke!

MAX (O.S)
No, you won't!

On the LIVING ROOM, over a couch, there's Max and Delila sitting next to each other. Max is holding a tiny bowl filled with grapes. He's about to toss it into Delila's mouth (opened) with a parabolic shot.

MAX
OK, here we go.

Max tosses the grape and lands inside Delila's mouth. They both cheer!

DELILA
Haha! Hell yeah!

MAX
See?! You didn't choke!

As Delila laughs, she gazes at something behind Max. Her face changes from euphoria to confusion.

She looks at the bouquet of flowers. 30 minutes earlier, they were fresh and red. Now... they're somehow brown and half-dry.

DELILA

Huh...

MAX

What is it?

DELILA

That's weird. They were red just half an hour ago.

Max turns around and notices the dry roses. He turns to look at Delila.

MAX

Well, they're not... 100% natural. They're artificial. Synthetic. That's why they were so expensive.

DELILA

Well, it's even weirder, 'cause I've never seen synthetic plants dry so easily... or dry at all--

MAX

(Annoyed)

Can we just..?!

(Sighs)

...not think about the flowers?

Delila looks at him, kinda scared.

DELILA

Alright. Easy there, boy. C'mon, let's try it with ya.

Max handles Delila the bowl of grapes and opens his mouth. Delila grabs one grape, aims and tosses it. A perfect shot. Both guys cheer.

9 INT. LIVING ROOM. 17 MINUTES LATER.

9

C.U: THE CLOCK ON THE WALL. It marks 21:47 hours.

A song is heard in the background, soft and coming out from speakers: **ELVIS PRESLEY - CAN'T HELP FALLING IN LOVE**. An obvious romantic song.

On the living room, a RADIO is on. The song plays from it. In the middle of the room, both Delila and Max are close to each other, dancing slowly at the soft rhythm of music.

MAX

I dance worse than a circus monkey,
don't I?

DELILA

(Chuckles)

Don't say that.

MAX

So, I'm a great dancer.

DELILA

OK, it's not good to exaggerate
either.

Both love birds laugh. Then, they give each other an intense stare. That kind of passionate, loving, hopeful stare... They can't hold it anymore. The one who gives the first move is Delila. She joins hers to Max's. It's a 10 second kiss. Soft, lovely... alive. After they separate their mouths, Delila rests her right cheek on Max's chest.

DELILA (cont'd)

Damn, you're heart's pumpin' crazy.

MAX

Yeah... I- I wasn't expecting that.

DELILA

Chill out. I'm here. You're safe.

A beat.

MAX

I love you.

A long beat. What is she gonna say?

DELILA

I love you too.

Delila closes her eyes, without noticing Max's face shows his infinite happiness... and somehow relief. A huge smile is drawn on his face. Delila's brow furrows.

DELILA (cont'd)

Huh...

MAX

What now? Is it the roses?

DELILA

I feel like some sort of deja vu.

MAX

Deja vu?

DELILA

Yeah, like... we've done this before.

Suddenly, Max face changes.

Delila ends up shrugging.

DELILA (cont'd)

It's probably the wine. Makes me see weird shit.

MAX

Yeah... you might have drunk too much wine.

Delila steps away from Max.

DELILA

Ah, dammit. I have to pee.

MAX

Well, y'know where the bathroom is.

DELILA

Sorry, again.

MAX

It's OK. Don't worry. I'll wait for you here.

Delila smiles at him and heads to the hallway. After she's gone, Max runs towards...

10 **INT. DINING ROOM / KITCHEN. CONTINUOUS.**

10

...the KITCHEN. He looks at the CLOCK WALL. It marks 21:50 hours.

Max then sighs, relieved. He makes a quick celebration move.

MAX

(Low voice)

Yes! C'mon, baby! 10 more minutes! 10 more!

CUT TO:

11 INT. HALLWAY. CONTINUOUS.

11

Delila arrives to the hallway and starts walking towards the bathroom door, passing through the second door. As she gazes down to her feet... She suddenly stops. Her face changes. Something just scared her.

On the floor, there are tiny DARK GREEN SPOTS. Very tiny, but dark enough to notice them in the wooden surface.

She might haven't seen them earlier because of the painful bite.

Delila hesitates, but her curiosity is bigger. She begins to follow the trail.

They go on, go on and go on...

...and disappear below the second door.

She takes the door handle and pulls the door--

CREEEEEEEK! The door hinges let go a loud CREAK. Delila turns to see the other side of the hallway, alert if Max shows up. She pulls the door slowly until it's completely open. After she does... the STENCH hits her nose, making her almost puke. Delila covers her nose with her arm and gives another gaze to the hallway. Max is nowhere near.

Delila looks at the opened door, revealing a series of stairs going all the way down to a dark room. THE BASEMENT.

Delila crosses the door frame and closes the door behind her.

12 INT. BASEMENT. CONTINUOUS.

12

In the middle of the dark, Delila tries to make her way downstairs. She touches the wall in her right, and holds herself with the left hand over the handrail.

After she finally arrives to the end of the stairs, she notices the stench is stronger.

She touches a LIGHT SWITCH, on the rocky surface. She presses it and the lights turn on--

On the other side of the room, 20 DEAD WOMEN are placed on the floor, in a row from left to right, with their legs tied and their arms tied behind their backs. Their butts on the ground, their backs leaned on the wall and their heads covered with black bags.

Delila almost screams, but knowing Max's true nature, she covers her mouth and holds her shouting.

The clothes of the dead bodies are covered in big dry dark green stains... Wait... The clothes...

Every single one of the bodies are using black jackets, yellow mustard shirts, jeans and black sneakers. Every single one of the 20 women are wearing that outfit...

Delila recognizes that...

...because after she leans her head down, discovers SHE'S WEARING THE SAME OUTFIT.

Delila's horror is huge, but her curiosity grows like a shadow inside her.

She starts walking forward slowly. Some noises are heard upstairs, but not near the basement door. Delila finally approaches the first dead body. Kneels in front of her. Takes the bag and pulls it away from the dead body's head...

IT'S DELILA. A DEAD DELILA. A CLONE? There's a huge knife slice wound on her neck. Instead of red blood, dark green liquid pulps out of the opened rotten flesh.

She kneels in front of the second dead body and pulls the bag away. A SECOND DEAD DELILA. WITH A WOUND ON HER NECK.

She stands up, horrified after seeing two clones of her and goes body by body, pulling the head bags off the victims.

...A THIRD DELILA... A FOURTH DELILA... A FIFTH... A SIXTH... A SEVENTH... TWENTY DEAD DELILAs. All of them with a slice wound on their necks.

Delila's eyes begin to cry. A tear goes all the way down her left cheek. Her horror is so huge... that she hasn't noticed that the basement door is opened. A COUPLE OF LEGS start walking downstairs.

Delila starts walking backwards, terrified, disgusted...

A RIGHT HAND holding a KNIFE shows up behind her head. A LEFT HAND on the other side. Suddenly, the left hand grabs Delila from the left part of her head, making her jolt up. There's not even time to react. The right hand SLICES THE KNIFE ALL THE WAY through Delila's neck. Instead of red thick liquid, DARK GREEN LIQUID PULPS OUT of the wound. Jets of liquid spray all over the dead bodies.

Delila, dying, turns around and sees MAX, holding a knife, and CRYING. As soon as she turns, the dark green liquid sprays all over Max's clothes. This one jumps away.

MAX

FUCK!

(To Delila)

Del, what were you fucking thinking?! Why do you have to ruin the perfect night always! I WAS THIS CLOSE! All you have to do was to stay until 10! 10 fucking minutes! THIS FUCKING CLOSE! Why can't I have the perfect night?! I'm tired of you! I just want you to be mine!

Delila's body finally falls to the ground. DEAD.

Max panics. He runs upstairs.

13 INT. BASEMENT. MOMENTS LATER.

13

MONTAGE: As we see quick images of what Max is doing, the sound of a TICK TACK is heard. Growing higher and higher...

-Max throws two ropes and a black bag next to Delila's dead body.

-He ties up both arms behind the back and the legs.

-He pulls Delila's body to the wall and places her next to DELILA #20.

-He places back the black bags over every single one of the dead Delilas. Finally, he hesitates in front of DELILA #21. But he decides to put the bag on her head.

-He takes a bucket of chlorinated water all over the floor. The water flushes the dark green blood to a drain gate.

-Max turns off the light switch and runs upstairs. As he closes the door, darkness surrounds the room once more. We have a final gaze of DELILA #21'S DEAD BODY, until there's nothing more than a half-second black screen.

14 INT. MAX'S BEDROOM. MOMENTS LATER.

14

MONTAGE CONTINUES:

-Max strips as fast as possible. His clothes are sprayed in dark green stains.

-He opens a laundry basket, revealing 20 SAME BLUE SHIRTS and 20 SAME BROWN PANTS filling the basket. As Max throws his clothes into the basket, his blue shirt and brown pants mix with the others. He closes the basket.

-He opens his wardrobe and reveals 5 OTHER BLUE SHIRTS AND 5 OTHER BROWN PANTS. He takes one set.

-He dresses up faster.

15 **INT. BATHROOM. MOMENTS LATER.** 15

MONTAGE CONTINUES:

-Max washes up his face. Some dark green blood flushes through the sink.

-Max dries up his hair and face.

16 **INT. HALLWAY. MOMENTS LATER.** 16

MONTAGE CONTINUES:

-Max closes the basement door with a key. Something he should have done 21 dead bodies ago.

17 **INT. LIVING ROOM. MOMENTS LATER.** 17

MONTAGE CONTINUES:

-Max picks up the bowl of grapes and Delila #21's purse.

-As he runs to the kitchen, he sees something that horrifies him for a moment. He growls and runs away.

-Reveal the bouquet of roses. Dry, withered, black... DEAD.

18 **INT. DINING ROOM / KITCHEN. CONTINUOUS.** 18

MONTAGE CONTINUES: The sound of the clock is heard LOUDER AND LOUDER...

-Max opens a little door underneath the sink.

-He takes out a yellow trash can. Opens the lid. Reveals 20 other purses and tons of grapes. He tosses the 21st purse and the other grapes into the trash can. He keeps the trash can inside again and closes the door.

-Max opens the fridge, revealing dozens and dozens of Mac & Cheese bowls. He takes out one.

-He puts the new bowl inside the microwave and presses 5 minutes.

-He tosses the two plates, the two forks and the KNIFE stained with dark green blood.

-He gazes back at the clock on the wall. It marks 21:58 hours. Then, he opens the faucet and starts washing up everything.

As he washes the dishes, the TICK TACK begins to echo in the background. Then, Max begins to speak:

MAX

Dalila Velazquez. Couldn't there be any other beautiful girl in the world? Your eyes, your skin, your hair, your way of being... Jesus... I love it all. I love how you smile at me. How you stare at me. How you laugh at my jokes. Thank you for making me feel human.

While he speaks, DELILA'S INSTAGRAM PICTURES start showing up in screen, every 3 seconds before the other picture. Then, every 2 seconds. Then, every 1 second. Then, every half-second, cutting in screen in a psychotic loop, repeating and repeating and repeating and repeating and repeating--

INSERT IMAGE: AN SOUND-LESS EXTREME CLOSE UP of the LONG CLOCK HAND stops in the number 12.

SLAM! A DOOR CLOSES NEARBY as MAX ends up washing the knife. As soon as the SLAM is heard, Max stops washing and closes the faucet. He stays still.

DALILA (O.S)

Hello?

Max leaves the knife on the wringer nearby, along the forks and the plates. He dries his hands with a cloth and turns around, giving a fake, tired grin.

...from behind a wall...

...in the ENTRANCE HALL...

...DALILA shows up, looking for any signs of life in the house.

She's wearing a black sweater, a yellow mustard shirt and jeans, and holding a purse in her right shoulder. Max waves at her.

MAX

Hi there!

19 INT. LIVING ROOM. CONTINUOUS.

19

As we PULL AWAY from the kitchen, we see DELILA #22 walking inside the kitchen, embracing Max. Then, we know the rest...

DALILA

Hiiii!!!

MAX

Welcome, Dalila!

DALILA

Thanks.

They both separate from each other.

MAX

Great! You-- you came right on time!

Max points at the clock OFF SCENE. It marks exactly 22:00 hours. Dalila shrugs.

As they speak, **ELVIS PRESLEY - CAN'T HELP FALLING IN LOVE** plays on the background. We see the **BOUQUET OF ROSES**. Beautiful, pretty, red... ALIVE.

DALILA (O.S)

Yeah. I consider myself the kind of girl that likes being right on time.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END.
AGAIN.

