COBRA BLOOD COCKTAIL

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Nothing to see but farm tracts and sparse patches of trees - save for one unremarkable sedan.

The car pulls off the pavement and stops next to a raised bank with a scant line of tangled and netted overgrowth.

Out steps GEORGE RUDD, forties, who scans the area.

EXT. SMALL LAKESIDE - DAY

George treads down a worn path. In the lake sits a tiny decrepit houseboat. An ugly brown dwelling covers most of it like an obnoxious growth. George stops a few feet from it.

GEORGE

Hey! Anybody in there?

REGINA

Yes?

George flashes a police badge. She looks at it worriedly.

GEORGE

I’m Detective George Rudd with the Loral County Police Department. Anybody in there with you?

REGINA

No.

GEORGE

How’d you get out here?

REGINA

My boyfriend brought me.

GEORGE

Where’s he?

REGINA

He’ll be back any minute...
George approaches.

GEORGE
Turn around and put your hands on the boat.

REGINA
What’s this all about? I didn’t do anything.

George handcuffs her. Tires CRUNCH gravel by the road. They both cock their heads and George pulls a gun.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

JEREMY, thirties, steps out of a weather beaten pickup truck and suspiciously eyes George’s vehicle. He pulls a black gun from his truck and stuffs it in the back of his pants.

EXT. SMALL LAKESIDE - DAY

Jeremy cautiously approaches the waiting George, who hides his gun behind him.

GEORGE
Jeremy Knight?

JEREMY
Yeah, who’s askin’?

Jeremy looks up to see Regina. She turns and jangles her handcuffed wrists. Jeremy reaches behind him but George pulls his gun first.

GEORGE
Put the gun down!...Put it down!

Jeremy hesitates a moment, then slowly lowers his weapon.

INT. HOUSEBOAT - DAY

Jeremy and Regina sit next to one another, handcuffed separately, in the cramped dwelling. George goes through a gym bag stuffed with cash.

GEORGE
You two kids really hit the jackpot, didn’t you?
3.

JEREMY
Look. I don’t know her.

George glances up at Regina, who looks terribly frightened.

GEORGE
Yeah, well she thinks you’re her boyfriend.

George slightly laughs as he flips Jeremy’s gun into the air and catches it.

GEORGE
What were you going to do with a fake gun? You rob the bank with this?

Jeremy releases a defeated sigh.

JEREMY
People think it’s real.

George zips the bag. He stands with his back to the door when a cold steel barrel pokes him in the back of the head with the CLICKING of a hammer being cocked.

MAN’S VOICE (O.S.)
Drop the bag.

George obeys.

His hand reaches from behind.

THE POET
Give me the gun.

George tries to hand him Jeremy’s gun.

THE POET
The real one.

George frowns, reaches into his pocket and surrenders his gun. The Poet takes it.

THE POET
Put your hands behind your back.
George does. The LATCHING of handcuffs.

THE POET
I’ve got my own cuffs.

He reaches into George’s pocket and takes his handcuff key.

THE POET
I can always use another key, though.

George is shoved into the cramped room and falls to the floor, dropping the fake gun.

The Poet enters, well dressed with a smooth silencer attached to the barrel of his gun.

George looks up from the floor with a desperate face.

GEORGE
I’m a police detective. My badge is in my pocket.

The Poet ignores him and scopes the tiny room.

THE POET
Silence the pianos and with muffled drum; Bring out the coffin, let the mourners come.

He looks down at George.

THE POET
W.H. Auden.

The Poet takes a seat.

THE POET
You probably don’t get much culture out here in the sticks.

Regina trembles as though she might have a heart attack.

REGINA
Will someone please tell me what’s going on?
That’s what I’d like to know.

And who the fuck are you?

George tries to use the wall to push himself to his feet. The Poet kicks him back to the floor and sits back down.

Look! I’m a police officer!
(nods at Jeremy)
And that’s a wanted bank robber!

I didn’t have anything to do with any bank robbery!

I don’t even know her!

The Poet grins.

I shall take my scattered selves and make them one…
Teasdale.

What the fuck are you talking about?!

I’m a poet in search of a good gourmet cobra.

What the fuck kind of answer is that?! Just tell us what the fuck is going on!

George sits up in realization.
GEORGE
You’re an assassin.

The Poet looks delightedly at George.

THE POET
Are you familiar with my work?

GEORGE
I’ve heard of you.

JEREMY
Well, tell the rest of us.

George glances at Jeremy with an air of desperation.

GEORGE
There’s a professional assassin called the Cobra.
And one called the Poet.

Regina looks timidly at the Poet.

REGINA
You must be the Poet.

He smiles.

THE POET
Always for the first time...
Breton.

Regina nervously smiles back.

REGINA
I keep my answers small
and keep them near...
Elizabeth Jennings.

The Poet’s face lights up.

THE POET
Ahh, a poetry aficionado...
a kindred spirit if there
were such a thing.

The Poet lowers his gun. He’s happy now.
THE POET
Very well then. Out with it. I’m in pursuit of the infamous assassin, the Cobra.

JEREMY
What the fuck does that have to do with us?

The Poet’s face loses luster.

THE POET
Not as cultured as your lady friend.
(to Regina)
What do you see in this baboon?

JEREMY
I told you motherfuckers; I don’t even know this broad.

THE POET
And so articulate.

JEREMY
(frustrated)
What the fuck are you doin’ here?

George struggles to his knees.

GEORGE
He thinks one of us is the Cobra.

THE POET
Correction. I know one of you is the Cobra. And I can’t tell you how delighted I am to know I’m in the same room with the aforementioned killer whilst he is in restraint.

He looks delightfully down at George.
THE POET
Just think...I may have
disarmed and detained the
infamous assassin myself
and kicked him to the
floor already.

He looks at Regina and smiles.

THE POET
Or perhaps the Cobra is
a lady. Your Jennings
quote would certainly be
a high point to the
occasion...to know we’d had
such an eloquent exchange.

He looks at Jeremy with contempt.

JEREMY
I really hope it’s not you.
At the very least, I would
hope such an uncouth and
uncultured knuckle dragger
such as yourself was only
a façade.

Regina timidly speaks up.

REGINA
Why do they call him the
Cobra?

THE POET
I wonder that myself. It’s
not unusual for assassins
to receive names based on
their patterned behavior...
I myself am an example of
such ritual nomenclature.

He smiles reflectively.

THE POET
I’ve heard tale that the
Cobra actually drinks a
concoction called a
Cobra’s Blood Cocktail.
REGINA
What’s that?

THE POET
It’s a mixture of whiskey and cobra blood.

Regina winces.

REGINA
Sounds gross.

THE POET
In Indonesia, it’s believed that cobra blood prevents diseases and acts as an aphrodisiac. I myself drank some in Jakarta once.

The Poet drifts into reflection.

THE POET
It was a disgusting concoction, a mixture of arak, a local homemade whiskey, and King Cobra blood. It was one hundred and twenty five dollars a glass. The arak was so repellent,...I couldn’t taste the blood.

REGINA
So you recite poetry before you kill people? That’s your thing?

The Poet smiles.

THE POET
It is conceit that kills us; and makes us cowards instead of gods...D.H. Lawrence.

JEREMY
But the Poet is such a pussy name.

The Poet gives Jeremy a scathing glare.
JEREMY
Seriously. What kind of pussy assassin recites poetry.

The Poet raises the gun to Jeremy’s leg. Even with the silencer, the blast is loud and echoed in the tiny room. A piece of Jeremy’s thigh explodes in blood spatter.

Regina SCREAMS and Jeremy YELLS agonizingly as he writhes.

JEREMY
Fuck! Fuck!

George desperately tenses.

GEORGE
He’s going to kill us all.

Regina looks at George, horrified, and breathlessly pants.

THE POET
That’s one way to kill the Cobra. But I do so want to meet him first. If the guilty party would simply speak up, I would be willing to kill only the affected individual.

GEORGE
And leave witnesses? I don’t think so.

Jeremy loudly MOANS and GROANS in pain.

JEREMY
You fuckin’ asshole! I need a doctor!

George sees water slowly pooling on the side of the room.

GEORGE
You shot a hole in the boat.

Regina’s panting turns to full scale terrified WHEEZING and GASPING.
11.

REGINA
I need my inhaler!

THE POET
You’re asthmatic?

She urgently nods.

REGINA
(wheezing)
In my purse!

The Poet rifles through Regina’s purse and pulls out an inhaler. He holds it up and she inhales the medicine.

THE POET
What’s wrong? Why isn’t it working?

GEORGE
She’s in shock. She knows she’s about to be murdered.

The Poet turns to George angrily.

THE POET
Shut up!

JEREMY
I need a fuckin’ doctor! I’m gonna lose my fuckin’ leg if you don’t…

THE POET
Shut up!

GEORGE
You’re losing it.

The Poet looks at George and pauses. He tries to compose himself.

Regina falls to the floor WHEEZING and finally succumbs. The Poet feels her neck for a pulse. He lowers his eyes.

THE POET
She’s dead.
JEREMY
Hey man! She was the Cobra.
You got her, man. Now you can go.

THE POET
The Cobra didn’t have asthma.

JEREMY
You don’t know that. Maybe that’s why they called her the Cobra. She sounded kinda like a snake hissing the way she was gasping for air.

The Poet drags Regina’s dead body out of the room, leaving Jeremy and George alone a moment.

JEREMY
Are you the Cobra?

George looks up.

GEORGE
No…You?

JEREMY
I need a doctor. I’m going to bleed to death.

George looks at Jeremy’s leg, which is covered in blood.

GEORGE
You’ve never killed anyone before, have you?

The Poet stirs from his trance.

GEORGE
How could you get the name the Poet? If your victims are dead, how would the authorities know you recite poetry? You gave yourself that name.
The Poet just stares at George in disbelief.

THE POET
I’ve killed people.

GEORGE
You’re just a kid. What’s this about? Making a name for yourself?

He aims the gun at George. George braces himself in a growing puddle of water.

THE POET
Your grief for what you’ve lost holds a mirror up to where you’re bravely working…Rumi.

GEORGE
Cut the shit, kid. You’re no killer.

The Poet stares blankly at George. Jeremy YELLS.

JEREMY
One person’s dead!...I’m dying!...He’s a cop!...You need to cut your losses, kid!

The Poet’s eye twitches. He keeps his stony gaze fixed on George while he swings the gun from George to Jeremy’s head and pulls the trigger.

SPLAT!

Blood spatters across the wall. Jeremy’s head flies back and then his whole body leans forward lifelessly and slumps to the floor.

George winces helplessly.

GEORGE
Goddamn it!

The Poet keeps indifferent eyes trained on George.

THE POET
Anymore analogies?
He lowers the gun but he doesn’t look relaxed at all.

GEORGE
You just crossed the line, kid. There’s no goin’ back from here.

THE POET
I sincerely hope you’re the Cobra. You’ve definitely been the most challenging of the bunch.

The Poet clumsily struggles to drag the larger Jeremy out of the room. He finally manages.

George, alone, SPLASHES the rising water as he struggles to get to his feet. He frantically moves by the door.

When the Poet returns, George rushes him and SLAMS him against the side of the room. He kneels him in the groin. The Poet’s gun plops into the water on the floor.

The Poet goes down. George stomps on him until he’s barely even awake. He freezes when he sees something...

GEORGE
You?

A bullet rips through George’s throat and blasts blood everywhere. George falls to the floor GURGLING desperately.

Regina stands in the doorway and points the Poet’s gun with her handcuffs dangling from her wrist. She steps into the room and hovers over the Poet.

REGINA
I made sure you would know I was here.

The Poet looks up at her, barely able to speak.

THE POET
But how? You were dead.

REGINA
A drug that lowers the pulse. You gave it to me yourself…with the inhaler.
THE POET
What about the others?

REGINA
I knew someone lived here but I admit I didn’t know he was a robbery suspect.

George moves lethargically as he GURGLES.

REGINA
(to the Poet)
You’ve got it all wrong. They call me the Cobra because I’m two faced, like the eye patterns on the back of a cobra hood.

George’s GURGLING subsides as he succumbs to death. The poet struggles to say something.

THE POET
Death was in that poisonous wave...

REGINA
And in its gulf a fitting grave.

The Poet strains to smile.

THE POET
Poe.

Regina fires into the Poet’s throat. His neck explodes with blood. He GURGLES as he grabs his throat in terror.

She BLASTS several holes right through the bottom of the boat and then SLOSHES to the door in the now several inches of water.

She turns and looks at the blood all over the Poet’s face.

REGINA
Can you taste the blood?

The Poet just GURGLES helplessly in the bloody pool.
REGINA
That’s my Cobra Blood
Cocktail.

She exits, leaving the Poet to die and the boat to sink.

FADE OUT.