

Darkness Bound

By

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FADE IN:

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

At the center of a windowless room sits MARGO ROMANO (40's), gagged and bound to an wooden chair. Tears roll down her face as she watches a NEWS ANCHOR on a TELEVISION SET, mounted on a wall.

NEWS ANCHOR

And so the city of Chicago lays to rest feared mob boss, Pino Romano, and his fourteen year old daughter, Liza. The two were gunned down early on Tuesday morning at their Gold Coast townhouse. The whereabouts of Romano's wife, Margo, remain unclear.

Margo smashes the chair off the floor and screams in muffled fury as the shot cuts to a large gathering at a graveside, and two coffins being lowered into the ground.

NEWS ANCHOR

Police are asking for anyone with information about the murders to come...

A door behind Margo swings open and two well set men enter the room.

NIAL O'BRIEN (30's), walks to the television set and turns it off at the wall. His colleague, ROBERT MONTELLA (40's), saunters over to Margo and pulls down her gag.

ROBERT

And there you go, say goodbye to Pino.

MARGO

(spluttering)

What the fuck did Liza do? You fucking animals, what...

NIAL

She wasn't meant to die, the boss is taking care of the idiot who shot her. Some decorum needs to be maintained, even in these ugly times.

MARGO
Decorum? You two are pigs, fucking
maiali the lot of you!

ROBERT
What's done is done, just worry
about yourself.

Margo narrows her gaze at Robert.

MARGO
Fuck you, you jumped up piece of
shit! Do what you want with me, it
doesn't make a fucking difference
now. Let me go and meet my maker,
just so I can be with Liza again.

ROBERT
Not Pino?

MARGO
You and I both know he ain't got
past Peter.

NIAL
And you will?

MARGO
I stand more of a chance than
anyone in this room.

NIAL
You hear that, Robert? That's sweet
ain't...

A HISS, and the room goes pitch black as the light cuts out.

NIAL
(screaming)
What the fuck happened to the
light!

ROBERT
Calm down, it's just the fuse gone.
Go find the box.

NIAL
I can't!

ROBERT
What are you talking about? Go get
the box you deficiente.

NIAL
(hyperventilating)
Please, Robert! Please, I can't
fucking move!

ROBERT
Christ alive, you wait here.

We hear footsteps head towards the door, and Robert turns on the torch on his cellphone as he walks out of the room.

The sound of Robert's footsteps fade, and are replaced by the soft whimpers of Nial.

MARGO
You alright, hun?

NIAL
Turn on the light, please, turn on
the...

A BUZZ, and light returns to reveal Nial curled in a ball in the corner of the room, sweat running down his forehead.

Robert returns through the door and clocks his colleague.

ROBERT
For fuck's sake, what's wrong with
you?

NIAL
My nyctophobia, it was the hole, I
shouldn't have been there.

ROBERT
That's nice. Now, what the fuck's
wrong with you?

MARGO
He's afraid of the dark, dipshit.
Ain't ya, sweet heart?

Nial stumbles back to his feet, raises his fist and staggers across to Margo, who smiles back at him.

NIAL
You shut your mouth before I...

Robert runs to Nial, grabs him around his neck from behind, and starts to drag his colleague towards the open door.

ROBERT
Enough from both of you. Fucking
hell O'Brien, man up will you?

Nial struggles but he can't break Robert's grip and is finally dragged out of the room. Margo blows a kiss in his direction as the door slams shut.

BEGIN DREAM SEQUENCE - EXT. PARK - DAY

Liza sits under a tree in an immaculate park, reading a book. Birds fly through the air, and massive buildings thrust upwards from behind trees in the distance.

Liza stops and slowly puts the book down, then turns to CAMERA:

LIZA
(whispering)
Come join me, mom. Leave that mess
behind and join me.

END DREAM SEQUENCE

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

Margo wakes from her dream, her face twisted in pain.

She pauses for a beat before she SCREAMS, and lifts herself in the chair and returns it to the floor at pace. A crack.

Again, she lifts herself into the air and brings the chair back down. Another crack, and splinters fly from its legs.

One final effort, she lifts the chair up and crashes it into the floor. A SMASH, and the legs and arm rests shatter, and her cloth restraints loosen.

Margo stumbles to her feet, and tears the restraints from her limbs.

MARGO
I'm coming, Liza.

We hear footsteps running down the adjacent corridor.

Margo hurriedly looks around the room. She grabs a broken chair leg, sharpened at the top where it splintered, and rushes beside the closed door.

The door swings open and Robert enters, stopping in his tracks when he sees the broken chair. Just as he turns, Margo thrusts the broken chair leg upwards into his throat, causing the man to collapse to the ground in a bloody mess.

NIAL (O.S.)

Robert? What's going on in there?

Margo kneels beside the dying man, pads him down and finds a Smith & Wesson in his pocket.

NIAL (O.S.)

What the fuck is going on in there?
Don't be messing around.

Nial's footsteps can be heard stomping down the hallway. Margo picks up the gun and holds it close to her chest.

NIAL

Robert? What the...

SMACK. Just as Nial enters the room Margo smashes him in the face with the gun. Nial stumbles back, stunned, but regains his composure and lunges at Margo.

Panicked, Margo throws herself at the wall and hits the light switch, plunging the room into darkness. Nial lets out a scream of panic. Margo seizes her chance, and flees through the open door.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Margo enters the hallway, and flicks off the light switch. Nial's screams can be heard as she fumbles her way to a door at the end of the hall.

Once at the door, she spots the fuse box. Margo opens the box, takes out the fuses and smashes them on the floor, before she opens the front door and flees into the night.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Panting heavily, Margo sprints through a forest. Leaves crunch and twigs snap underfoot. Margo runs, dodging branches and stumbling over tree stumps, until she falls out of the forest and onto a road.

Headlights can be seen in the distance, slowly approaching her. Margo raises herself to her feet and waves her hands in the air. The car comes to a rest beside her.

Margo sprints around to the driver's window, which winds down to reveal an OLD MAN (70's).

OLD MAN
Holly hell, what's a nice lady like
you doing all the way out here?

MARGO
I'm so sorry, sir.

The Old Man looks confused.

OLD MAN
Sorry? Sorry for what?

MARGO
I'm going to need your car, it's an
emergency.

OLD MAN
Well, I can give you a lift to the
service station down the road,
there's a phone booth there.

Margo slowly raises her gun to the Old Man's window. Her hands shake and her grip is unsure, but the Old Man isn't taking any chances and slowly exits the car.

OLD MAN
Some people. Can't trust anyone
these days.

MARGO
I really am sorry, I have to pay my
respects to someone.

Margo jumps into the driver's seat and slams the door shut. There's a beat, before she hits the accelerator and speeds away, leaving the Old Man behind.

INT. COFFIN - UNKNOWN - FLASHBACK

Nial lies in a padded coffin, sparsely lit by a cigarette lighter held in his shaking hand.

A banging on the wooden exterior.

MAN (O.S.)
Prepared to meet your maker,
O'Brien?

NIAL
Just fucking let me outta here!

MAN (O.S.)
No chance, nighty night.

We hear the noise of soil hitting the outside face of the coffin, and the sound of a shovel digging dirt.

NIAL
(screaming)
Stop! Let me out of here!

The man outside laughs, and the noise of the soil hitting the coffin continues. Nial starts to cry, and then his lighter runs out of fuel, plunging him into darkness.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

In the pitch black room, all that can be heard are Nial's whimpers and his labored breathing.

A cellphone ring tone sounds. After some fumbling, Nial drags a cellphone from his pocket. He answers the call.

NIAL
(stumbling)
H...hello.

BOSS (V.O.)
(over phone)
Nial?

NIAL
Boss, she escaped.

BOSS (V.O.)
What do you mean she escaped?

NIAL
Robert's dead, she threw the switch, and ran out the house.

BOSS (V.O.)
Threw the switch? You said you were over this darkness shit, we got you out of that hole, you're alive...you lied to me, Nial.

NIAL
It started up again, I can't shake it, I can't...

BOSS (V.O.)

Shut the hell up. You listen here, I've no use for someone who can't go out in the fucking dark, so you better just grow a pair and get moving. You hear?

NIAL

But...

BOSS (V.O.)

NO FUCKING BUTS! This is your last chance, find her or I'll bury you myself this time.

CLICK. The line goes dead. Nial stares at the shaft of light generated by his cell, it seems to offer some comfort.

He tries to raise himself to his feet, but collapses to the floor again.

NIAL

Come on, Nial. Think, dipshit, think.

A beat, before he looks down at his cellphone. He gingerly flicks a menu down on the screen and presses the torch button.

The cellphone shoots a strong beam of light across the room. He staggers to his feet and enters...

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Nial slowly crawls along the wall of the hallway, aiming the cellphone's torch towards the front door.

Stumbling around like a toddler, he makes it to the entrance where he opens the front door, collapses to his knees and vomits loudly.

INT. OLD MAN'S CAR - NIGHT

Margo sits at the wheel with mournful eyes. The Smith & Wesson lies alone on the passenger's seat.

MARGO

I'm coming for you, Liza.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Nial stumbles along the forest floor, his forehead dripping with sweat and his breathing short. He follows the trail of footprints and broken twigs, using the cellphone light, until he finds the Old Man standing at the side of the road.

OLD MAN

Well now, doesn't look like I'm the only one having a bad night.

NIAL

(panting)

Did you see her?

OLD MAN

See her? Is this the woman with the gun who stole my car?

NIAL

Shit!

OLD MAN

Thought so.

Nial falls to his knees.

OLD MAN

She said something about going to pay her respects?

NIAL

That'd be right.

OLD MAN

But our night could finally be looking up.

Nial looks up at the Old Man, who's outstretched arm points in the direction of some headlights coming towards them.

OLD MAN

Thank the lord above.

The Old Man walks into the middle of the road and waves the car down.

A WOMAN (20's), opens the driver's door and exits the car.

WOMAN

What are you doing out here?

OLD MAN

Me and my friend here have had a
big run in with a little lady.

WOMAN

Friend?

The Old Man looks to where Nial was crouched, only to find nothing but asphalt.

SLAM. The car door shuts and Nial, at the wheel, turns on the car's cabin light and accelerates past Woman and Old Man.

OLD MAN

For the love of god.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

The sun has now crept over the horizon, and gently illuminates the Chicago cityscape in the distance.

The Old Man's car speeds into a leafy parking lot and brakes heavily. Margo swings open the door and jumps out of the car, gun in hand.

She runs past a planter, grabbing a handful of flowers as she goes, and through the main gates of a cemetery.

INT. WOMAN'S CAR - DAY

The return of the sun has brought a new found zeal to Nial. The look of fear and panic has subsided and one of determination and anger now covers his face.

NIAL

I'm coming for you, Margo.

EXT. GRAVESIDE - DAY

The sun has now fully risen, and Margo stands facing two headstones, flowers in one hand, and the pistol in the other.

She walks over to one that reads "PINO ROMANO". She pauses at it for a beat, before she spits over the front of the stone.

Margo turns and walks to the adjacent headstone, that reads "LIZA ROMANO". She falls to her knees and places the gun in her lap, before laying the flowers by the headstone.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

The Woman's car speeds into the parking lot and screeches to a halt. Nial leaps out of the driver's door and sprints towards the graveyard gates.

EXT. GRAVESIDE - DAY

Margo, still on her knees, sobs quietly by Liza's headstone.

MARGO

I'm so sorry I wasn't there for you, Liza. I should have taken you away from all of your father's shit, but I just couldn't find the strength to fight him.

Behind Margo, there's the sound of leaves being trampled underfoot.

MARGO

He was a monster, but you were an angel. An undeniable angel with a beautiful life ahead of you.

The sound of the crunching leaves get louder as the footsteps get closer. Margo pulls one hand away from the ground, and slowly moves it towards the gun on her lap.

MARGO

I'm gonna make it up to you, I promise, and I just pray forgiveness and hope I may meet you on the other side.

Margo pulls the hammer back on the handgun. The noise of the footsteps continue for a moment, until they stop suddenly.

CUT TO BLACK:

MARGO

Rest in peace, sweet angel.

THE END