

The Stone Within

EXT. CEMETERY - DAWN

Four figures stand together in a small family plot just outside the walls of a modest castle.

HECTOR, 35, and PETRONA, 24, find solace in each others arms as they gaze upon the three small graves at their feet.

Their intricately embroidered clothes do nothing to keep the cold rain from soaking them to the bone.

Petrona's pale face and cough betray her secret.

A friar quietly recites a burial prayer in Latin.

FABIAN, 31, arms crossed, glares at Petrona from beneath the hood of his coat.

INT. CASTLE - DINING HALL - DAY

The dark castle recites sounds of dripping water.

A muted argument can barely be heard between the drips.

INT. CASTLE - PASSAGEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Hector and Fabian face off in a firm whisper, barely illuminated by the flickering torch light.

FABIAN

She must not be allowed to freely  
wander Hector!

HECTOR

How dare you speak to me in such a  
manner! Know your place Fabian and  
know it well. Petrona is of no  
concern to you.

FABIAN

Of no concern? Already she has  
been the death of your own  
children. Must I too die before  
you'll heed my words?

Hector clasps Fabian by the throat and SLAMS him against the stone wall, strangling any more words from escaping.

HECTOR

Because you are...were, their  
uncle, I will forget your words.

(MORE)

HECTOR (cont'd)  
Speak ill of my family again, and I  
shall rip the life from your body  
where you stand, brother!

Hector releases Fabian and walks away. Fabian falls to a knee and regains his breath.

INT. CASTLE - DINING HALL - CONTINUOUS

Petrona, hidden from their view, stands at the end of the passageway. Listening.

A single tear rolls down her cheek. An unbearable sadness marks her sickly face.

A faint cough escapes her mouth, betraying her presence.

INT. CASTLE - PASSAGEWAY - CONTINUOUS

Fabian hears it and stands. His quick walk toward the dining hall breaks into a full run.

He bursts through the threshold into the dining hall.

INT. CASTLE - DINING HALL - CONTINUOUS

Nobody's there.

INT. CASTLE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

A knock at the door.

HECTOR  
Come!

A servant enters carrying a tray with soup and drink.

Petrona is lying in bed. A HEALER mixes herbs into the drink and hands it to her. Hector paces the length of the room.

HEALER  
She needs rest Lord Hector.

HECTOR  
Leave us.

The healer and servant leave the room.

Petrona struggles as she gets out of bed.

HECTOR  
You must rest my love.

Petrona stands and takes Hector by the hands.

PETRONA  
Make peace with Fabian, Hector. He  
is all the family you have.

HECTOR  
You, are all the family I need.

They hold each other in a long embrace.

INT. CASTLE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

A fire burns at the far end of the kitchen. A large  
cauldron steams above it.

Petrona stands at a table in the corner, head hung low. She  
pours red wine into two goblets before her.

Fabian enters and startles her.

FABIAN  
What are you doing in here?

PETRONA  
Forgive me. I'll return to my  
room.

Petrona walks toward Fabian with goblets in hand.

PETRONA  
Fabian, do not quarrel with Hector  
over me. Brothers should allow  
nothing to come between them.

Fabian looks at her with disgust.

FABIAN  
Soon you will be gone. And our  
quarrel will be gone with you.

Petrona hands the goblets to Fabian.

PETRONA  
Make peace with Hector. He needs  
you now more than ever.

Fabian takes the goblets as Petrona leaves the kitchen.

INT. CASTLE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Fabian enters the room to find Hector sitting in a chair, his face buried in his hands, weeping.

Hector notices him, becomes enraged and stands.

HECTOR

Leave me!

FABIAN

I have come here to ask for your forgiveness Hector.

Fabian walks to him and holds out one of the goblets.

Hector reluctantly takes it.

FABIAN

Let us drink together like when we were young, and forget, for a moment, the sadness that surrounds us.

Hector stares into the wine as though an answer to his prayers lies within. He hugs Fabian.

HECTOR

I miss them Fabian. I'd give my life for one more moment with them.

FABIAN

Drink brother.

Hector releases Fabian from his hug, and gulps the wine down. Fabian drinks with him.

FABIAN

It has been days since you last slept. Rest now Hector. We will talk again in the morning.

Hector nods and walks to his bed while finishing his drink. Fabian exits the room and looks back through the door as he closes it.

FABIAN

(whisper)

Sleep well brother.

INT. CASTLE - UPPER BALCONY - CONTINUOUS

Fabian closes the door and walks toward his room.

He sees a figure walking in the main room below.

Petrona carries a lantern with her as she walks down the stairs to the catacombs below.

Obviously angered, Fabian pursues her. He meanders down the balcony as though he's had too much to drink. He bumps into the railing down the main stairs.

He reaches the staircase leading to the catacombs, finishes his drink and tosses the goblet aside. He pulls a torch off the wall and heads down the stairs.

FADE OUT:

A SCREAM.

INT. CASTLE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Hector awakens from a nightmare.

HECTOR

Petrona!

He looks to his side. Petrona is gone.

Groggy, he gets out of bed.

A servant enters.

SERVANT

Is everything alright Lord Hector?

HECTOR

Where is Lady Petrona?

The servant nervously delays her answer.

SERVANT

She went to the catacombs below last night Lord Hector.

HECTOR

You left her there all night!

Hector goes to strike her. The servant covers her face.

SERVANT

She said she was not to be  
disturbed Lord Hector!

Hector halts his strike. He rushes to leave the room.

SERVANT

Lord Hector!

(pause)

Lord Fabian went down after her,  
and returned this morning.

Hector becomes enraged at hearing this and rushes out of the  
room.

INT. CASTLE - DINING HALL - DAY

HECTOR

Petrona! Petrona!

Hector grabs a lantern and rushes down the stairs to the  
catacombs.

INT. CATACOMBS - DAY

The lantern reveals damp passageways, alcoves cut out along  
each side. Vertical caskets recessed within each alcove.

Hector frantically searches for Petrona.

Ahead, something glistens. Hector sprints toward the  
object.

It's Fabian's goblet.

Hector picks it up and strangles it as rage fills his eyes.

INT. CASTLE - DINING HALL - DAY

HECTOR

Fabian!

Fabian emerges from his room holding his head.

Hector looks up to the balcony where Fabian stands.

He rushes to Fabian, still wearing the same garments from  
the day before, and slams him against the wall.

HECTOR  
Where is she!

FABIAN  
Where is who Hector?

Hector's hand crashes across Fabian's face, a powerful slap.

HECTOR  
Where is Petrona?! What have you  
done with her?!

Hector slams Fabian against the wall again. A cloud of dust puffs off him.

Pain surges through Hector's head. A look of realization flashes across his face.

He releases Fabian and rushes to his room. Fabian follows.

INT. CASTLE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Hector grabs the goblet off the table and examines it. A mound of herbs lies at the bottom.

Hector looks to Fabian with madness in his eyes and hurls the goblet at him.

HECTOR  
Murderer! I welcome you into my  
home, provide for you, and this is  
how you thank me!

FABIAN  
No brother! I am no murderer!

Hector kicks Fabian through the bedroom door.

Fabian flies through it and crashes into the balcony rail.

INT. CASTLE - UPPER BALCONY - CONTINUOUS

Fabian holds his hands up in defense. Hector grabs him and throws him down the main stairs.

HECTOR  
Where is she?!

FABIAN  
I don't know Hector! I followed  
her below last night, this morning  
I woke in the tunnels below.

Hector drags Fabian over to the stairs leading to the catacombs and stands him up.

HECTOR  
Tell me where she is now!

FABIAN  
I don't know!

HECTOR  
LIAR!

Hector kicks Fabian down the stairs. Fabian tumbles down, his body bending in unnatural ways.

An audible CRACK as Fabian comes to a rest at the bottom.

Hector rushes to him.

Fabian's neck twisted. His eyes look of death.

HECTOR  
NO! Fabian! Fabian!

Fabian looks into Hectors eyes as his last breath escapes.

Hector holds his brothers body as he sobs uncontrollably.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAWN

Hector stands alone above his brothers grave.

SERIES OF SHOTS

-Hector alone in his room.

-Hector alone in the kitchen

-Hector alone at the grave site.

INT. CASTLE - DINING HALL - DAY

Alone, Hector sits at the dining hall table. A faint noise from the catacombs below.

INT. CATACOMBS - DAY

Hector scans the passageway with a lantern. Emptiness lays within the darkness ahead. A whisper emerges from the dark.

VOICE

Hector.

Frightened, Hector advances. The voice speaks again.

VOICE

Hector.

HECTOR

Who's there!

Hector delves deeper into the catacombs. A figure moves in the shadows ahead.

HECTOR

Show yourself!

Hector chases the shadow through the maze of corridors. It moves with supernatural speed from one intersection to the next.

Finally hector has it cornered at a dead end. No matter how close he gets, the lantern will not illuminate the figure.

HECTOR

Who are you! What do you  
want! Show yourself!

Hector loses his mind and hurls the lantern at the figure.

It passes through the dark shadow and crashes against the wall behind. The flames stick to the brick wall.

The air current draws the flames through the bricks along the cracks between them.

Darkness.

INT. CATACOMBS - LATER

Hector stands before the brick wall with a lantern and a pick axe. He holds the lantern up to the cracks between the bricks. The current draws the flame through the crack.

He sets the lantern down and smashes pick axe against the brick with all his might. The bricks move.

He smashes again. A brick dislodges. There's a chamber behind. He smashes over and over in a frenzy.

He has a hole large enough to peer through.

He holds the lantern within. The dust obscures his view for a moment. A figure can be seen on the floor within.

It's Petrona!

Hector rips at the wall with his bare hands, pulling each brick down with a great thud.

HECTOR

Petrona!

Hector gets a hole large enough to enter the tomb. Petrona's lifeless body lay curled up on the floor. Hector cradles her in his arms. Crying uncontrollably.

He rocks her back and forth.

HECTOR

Damn you Fabian.

Hector looks around the tomb and sees a mound of bricks and a bucket of mortar lying WITHIN the tomb.

HECTOR

Nooooooo!

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. CATACOMBS - DAY

Hector stands within the tomb with Petrona as he lays new bricks. Sealing himself in.

FADE OUT: