

BEACON

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. DITCH - TWILIGHT

TODD sits up in a daze. A shiner above his left temple, he slips off broken sunglasses, glances at wrecked mountain bike. MUFFLED SOUNDS draw his attention to the

ROAD

which runs from the sunset to the night sky. In between Todd stands amid a lifeless, ethereal netherworld.

QUICK FLASH

-- Truck speeds by. Horn BLARES. Bike bumps into flight.

BACK TO SCENE

Todd glances both ways, notices the BEACON of a distant radio tower in the darkness. MUFFLED VOICES and RADIO SOUNDS intensify as beacon brightens, then fade as it dims.

Todd turns to the sunset, starts walking.

ROAD (SERIES OF SHOTS)

-- Sun sets, day turns to night.

-- Todd plods along the middle lines.

-- Moon rises into a veil of clouds.

-- Shivering cold, Todd sways left and right of the lines.

-- Distant LIGHTNING flashes with a THUMP of thunder.

DARK ROAD

Twin lights appear ahead. Todd slows, squints. Turning desperate, look turns hopeful as a TRUCK slows to a stop. Excited, Todd goes to truck.

Window slides down. Lightning flashes the driver, a SEDUCTRESS clad in black.

QUICK FLASH

-- Seductress, clad in white, and Todd embrace.

BACK TO SCENE

Seductress lights cigarette, licks her swollen lips.

SEDUCTRESS  
Need a lift, Todd?

Taken aback, Todd studies Seductress' sexy features. Lights bounce across his face. He turns to twin headlights emerging from the darkness. Lightning flashes. Thunder RUMBLES with the WAILING of tortured souls.

SEDUCTRESS (CONT'D)  
Storm's almost here.

Todd steps backward, nods no.

TODD  
You called me ... Todd.

SEDUCTRESS  
It is your name. Coming or not?

Todd nods no as a CAR circles to a stop. Seductress steps on it. Truck spins around, speeds off. As it does a grotesque, demonic CREATURE grips the rear window like a gecko. Its eerie glowing eyes fix on Todd.

Lightning flashes the car driver, the same beautiful WOMAN, but is angelic and innocent.

QUICK FLASH

-- Same WOMAN and Todd walk hand in hand.

BACK TO SCENE

Holding his distance, Todd studies Woman's features.

WOMAN  
You're going the wrong way. Get in.

Todd glimpses at truck, now distant, and turns a curious look at Woman. Cautiously approaches car.

TODD  
Where we going?

WOMAN  
You are going home.

Woman points at distant beacon. Todd stares at the beacon, pauses at the VOICES and SOUNDS.

WOMAN (CONT'D)  
You hear it, don't you? Those are the sounds of the life you must go back to. But, we'll have to hurry before the storm hits.

Lightning bolts. Thunder CLAPS. Todd steps into

CAR

where he rolls neck, scans interior, stares at Woman who makes a gesture obviously familiar to him.

QUICK FLASH

-- Woman, reading astrology book, does a similar gesture as Todd looks over her shoulder.

WOMAN (V.O.)  
So, what happened to ya?

BACK TO SCENE

Todd breaks stare, clears throat, massages his shiner.

TODD  
I was riding my bike. Got run off the road.

Todd licks his lips as if thirsty. Woman hands him water. He guzzles water and leans back gazing at beacon.

TODD (CONT'D)  
What did you mean the sounds of the life I hafta go back to? What sounds? And that beacon?

WOMAN  
The sounds are broadcast from your real life through that radio tower.

TODD

I don't get it.

WOMAN

The beacon is your guiding light to your real life. But, it won't shine for long. There's a tempest coming.

TODD

Is this not my real life?

WOMAN

This is the Netherworld, the realm between life and death.

TODD

What?

WOMAN

When a person's body nears death it releases its soul temporarily into the Netherworld. Here, one's spirit awaits the journey to the Afterlife, or return to the living world.

TODD

You saying I'm dying?

WOMAN

In the real world you're in a coma. What you do here and now determines your fate.

TODD

This is insane.

Todd grabs handle, pushes on door.

WOMAN

You need to be patient.

Todd turns to Woman and studies her features.

TODD

I know you, don't I?

WOMAN

In a way.

Woman smiles, rubs her hand along Todd's cheek. They exchange fond looks.

TODD

That other woman ...

WOMAN

She is a soul-vendor.

TODD

Huh?

WOMAN

The grim reaper with a sales quota.

TODD

That gecko-looking thing?

WOMAN

Her true identity. Soul-vendors use animal spirits to cross to the living world. They manipulate events to bring souls here. Your bike wreck was no accident.

QUICK FLASH

-- A gecko runs across road. Todd veers bike around it and into the path of an incoming truck.

BACK TO SCENE

TODD

You and that soul-vendor look alike.

WOMAN

She is my opposite.

TODD

What are you?

WOMAN

I'm a manifestation of your soulmate. I exist because she loves you.

TODD

Maria -- where is she?

WOMAN

She's waiting for you.

Lightning flashes outside.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Lightning flashes outside. Todd opens eyes, glimpses at MARIA who sits beside bed and reads newspaper.

Maria notices Todd's eyes, leaps up and hovers over him.

MARIA

Todd? You okay, baby? Todd?

Todd's eyelids shut. Maria turns to a nurse walking past the door. She dashes out of room.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Lightning flashes. Rain batters windshield.

WOMAN

We're running out of time.

Woman steps on it.

TODD

Had I gone with your opposite --

WOMAN

By now the Keepers of the Netherworld would own your soul. Once in their captivity there's no escape. Not even a prayer would be answered. Your essence would be echoed in the form of a ghost forever roaming the place of your death.

Todd nods with disbelief. He begins to inhale deep as if having an anxiety attack. HEARTBEATS THUMP. Todd's face tightens. He doubles over. VOICES and SOUNDS dominate.

WOMAN

Todd, focus. We're almost there.

Todd rolls down window, notices TWIN HEADLIGHTS in mirror.

WOMAN

Oh my. Hang on.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Car speeds toward the beacon. Not far behind the twin headlights become the truck. Storm intensifies.

INT. TRUCK

Seductress steers and eyeballs the distant tail lights on a slope.

INT. CAR

Nauseous, Todd closes eyes as he bounces in seat. Woman shakes Todd awake while steering into a field.

WOMAN

Todd, we're here. C'mon.

Todd peeps out window, looks up at a RADIO TOWER jutting to the flashing heavens. He leans back, inhales calmly, and looks over at Woman.

TODD

I don't wanna leave you.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - SAME

Todd licks his chapped lips, clears dry throat.

MARIA

Talk to me, baby.

Maria holds Todd's hand.

BACK TO SCENE

Lightning bolts. Thunder EXPLODES. Rain pours. Wind intensifies. Voices HOWL. Lights bounce across their faces. Twin headlights approach.

WOMAN

Let's go.

Todd and Woman dash out of car and into the

FIELD

where a metal structure rises to the beacon. Lightning strikes the hilltop beyond.

TODD

Now what?



## WOMAN

Close your eyes and fly like your  
favorite bird.

Todd closes eyes, breathes deep. Woman steps back, turns  
to the truck stopping by the car.

Truck door opens. SPECTERS shoot into the wind and  
surround Todd who spreads arms like a bird.

Seductress steps out and faces Woman. Seductress raises  
arm. Hand emits sparks. Lightning skips off her hand  
and strikes tower.

The beacon shines on Todd. His illuminated body MORPHS  
into an owl, which launches into the lightning bolt.

FADE TO WHITE:

## MONTAGE - TODD'S REAL LIFE WITH MARIA

-- Todd exercises at mirror. Electricity HUMS. Lights  
flicker out and on.

-- Maria and Todd sit by lake, gaze at reflection in  
water.

## INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Todd opens eyes to Maria whose eyes well up. They  
exchange prolonged looks. With a look of relief, Maria  
run her hand along his cheek.

Todd pulls her to him, hugs her tight. He notices window  
behind Maria. A distant BEACON shimmers in the morning  
light.

FADE OUT.