

12 Nights of Christmas

"Legend of the Vendigum"

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FADE IN:

INT. THE VENDIGUM'S CABIN - NIGHT

A calendar countdown page on "12 days until Christmas" hangs against a dark and old wood paneled wall.

As we get closer to the calendar page, GROTESQUE MUNCHING and CRUNCHING noises can be heard.

The VENDIGUM appears, stepping in front of the wall to look at the calendar.

A dirty tattered boy, with pointed ears stands there mauling at something like it's a chicken drumstick.

He takes the fleshy food out of his mouth and draws a bloody cross through the calendar page.

On a workbench behind him, the aged pages of a big old leather bound book start to flick through by themselves.

The Vendigum approaches.

The book has stopped on an illustration of a young boy and girl fighting over a nutcracker.

THE VENDIGUM
Naughty, naughty...

INT. THE HAWKIN'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

MRS HAWKIN is putting the last row of lights on the bare Christmas tree setup in the window bay.

10 year old LUCAS and 12 year old MOLLY sit on the rug in front of it, rifling through the decorations.

MOLLY
Aaw, I found my nutcracker
decoration.

Lucas picks up a proper nutcracker and uses its mouth as a puppet to say:

LUCAS
(putting on a voice)
Your nutcracker's stupid, it doesn't
even look like me!

MOLLY

Stop it Lucas! You're stupid!

Mrs Hawkin gets ready by the plug socket.

MRS HAWKIN

Stop it you two, it's Christmas, be nice to each other. Ready?

She switches the tree lights on.

MRS HAWKIN

Whooo! Right get decorating.

She swigs her wine and leaves the room.

Lucas unwraps a tree chocolate and shoves it in his gob.

MOLLY

They're for the tree Lucas. They're not all for you.

LUCAS

(copying in a whiny voice)
They're for the tree Lucas!

He heads over to the tree to put up some decorations.

Molly just glares at him and follows.

She goes to put her nutcracker on a branch at the front and Lucas tries to grab it from her.

LUCAS

No you can't put that there. That's where I'm putting my star.

He tries to peel her grip off of it.

MOLLY

Stop it! You're going to ruin it!

LUCAS

It's stupid anyway!

He grabs the nutcracker and rips its head off.

A sarky little smirk creeps across his face.

Molly raises her head from the broken nutcracker on the floor to Lucas and glares at him.

He doesn't look so sarky anymore.

She starts to move in on him.

MOLLY

Boy are you gonna be sorry when The Vendigum comes for you.

LUCAS

There's no such thing as monsters, mum said so.

MOLLY

Oh yes there are and this one is one of the nastiest and scariest and he's gonna come for you.

Now Molly is the one smirking.

BY THE FIREPLACE - SHORT TIME LATER

Lucas and Molly sit in front of the beautiful CRACKLING fire while eating their cooked skewered marshmallows.

LUCAS

Molly...What is The Vendigum?

She turns to him and like a wondrous secret, she tells him in a hushed voice.

MOLLY

It was said that The Vendigum used to be a little boy just like you but something horrible happened to him.

LUCAS

What happened to him?

INT. THE VENDIGUM'S CABIN - NIGHT

An old mystical looking leather bound book embossed with the title "LEGEND OF THE VENDIGUM", sits on a dark wood table.

A dirty little boys hand strokes the cover.

MOLLY (V.O.)

He used to be such a kind boy...

The book is opened and reveals old Grimm fairy tale styled illustrations of children making fun of The Vendigum's pointy ears.

MOLLY (V.O.)
 ...But he'd been born with strange
 long pointy ears and people would
 make fun of him.

The page is flicked, showing The Vendigum happy decorating his Christmas tree and children peering through his window, plotting.

MOLLY (V.O.)
 Christmas was his favourite time of
 year. People were supposed to be
 merry and kind but others had another
 plan for him.

The page is flicked, showing The Vendigum tied to a tree in the woods and dressed up as an elf.

Predator eyes glow from the dark of the thick trees surrounding him.

MOLLY (V.O.)
 They dragged poor Vendigum deep into
 the woods, dressed him up to look
 like an elf to match his funny ears,
 tied him to a tree and left him
 there. What they didn't know was what
 else was hiding in the woods...

INT. THE HAWKIN'S FIREPLACE - CONTINUOUS

Molly and Lucas stare at each other up-close and intently in front of the fire.

LUCAS
 What? What else was in the woods?

MOLLY
 (turning away from him)
 I don't know if I should tell you.

LUCAS
 Please! What's in the woods? What happens?

MOLLY
 (snapping back close to him)
 Ferocious hungry wolves close in on
 him and eat him alive!

EXT. THE VENDIGUM'S WOODS - NIGHT

The bloody mauled body of The Vendigum tied to a tree.

A half eaten foot with the shoe still on, lays at the ground of the tree.

The fleshy, stringy eaten leg hanging above it, still attached to him.

INT. THE HAWKIN'S FIREPLACE - CONTINUOUS

Lucas trembles and gasps in fright.

MOLLY

They say, that since that night, the evil spirit of The Vendigum visits those that are nasty at Christmas, like they were to him and they are never seen again.

INT. THE HAWKIN'S LIVING ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

It is deathly silent and dark all through the house as the Hawkin's sleep...

The unlit abandoned Christmas tree sits there alone in the window.

The once roaring fire now dead, a dirty black empty space.

INT. THE HAWKINS STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

The dark desolate staircase leading up to the top landing is eerily still and quiet until...

The faintest glow of light starts to seep out from one of the rooms upstairs, giving the smallest extra detail to the top landing.

FOOT STEPS CREAK up there.

Lucas appears and drifts downstairs still half asleep.

INT. THE HAWKIN'S LIVING ROOM

He walks past the living room. Changes his mind and heads towards the tree.

He picks another tree chocolate to scoff.

Suddenly, TRICKLES OF SOOT start to drop down the chimney into the dead black fireplace.

Lucas is still munching when...

Strange small creature-like GRUNTLES can be heard.

Lucas spins around. Looking.

Seeing nothing.

But it's already out. Waiting. Watching him.

Lucas spots the two stockings either side of the fireplace.

He heads over, pulls a bag of chocolate coins out of one and then replaces it with the coins from the other stocking.

He's pleased with himself, until he looks down.

Lucas notices little black sooty footprints from the fireplace.

Something watches him among the Christmas tree.

It watches as Lucas's fearful rigid head follows the footprints all the way from the fireplace directly to where it watches him.

Lucas is frozen, fixed on the Christmas tree.

He can't take it anymore and bolts.

As he makes a run for the door, the creature sets after him.

Lucas gasps, darting up the stairs.

He reaches the top and turns the corner, out of sight.

The small gnarly creature scrambling up after him.

INT. LUCAS'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lucas SLAMS the door shut and runs to his bed.

He pulls the covers over him and switches on his torch.

Breathing deeply, waiting.

His door CREAKS open. He gasps!

His trembling eyes peaking from the top of the bed sheet.

All he can see is the dark foreboding room.

Lucas drifts his torchlight along the floor.

The light reaches the door. Now moving the shaky light across the door out into the room.

IT SHINES ON A HAND!

Darts the light across to reveal - Molly.

MOLLY

What are you doing?

Lucas runs to Molly and grips her tight around the waist.

LUCAS

The Vendigum! It's here! It's gonna get me!

MOLLY

Urgh, Lucas...It's not really real, I was just trying to scare you.

LUCAS

No it is, it really is!

Molly peels him off of her, looks him straight in the eye.

MOLLY

Wait right here. I will show you there is nothing to be scared of.

Molly takes the torch from him and starts looking round the room.

Lucas stands near the open door. A black abyss looms behind him from the hallway.

MOLLY

(scanning under the bed)
Nope nothing here either.

She heads back over to Lucas, that menacing pitch darkness still behind him.

MOLLY

See it's fine, just go back to bed.

LUCAS

Okay, I really did think--

--Suddenly Lucas is ripped into the darkness and disappears.
Molly drops the torch. Screaming.

INT. THE VENDIGUM'S CABIN - A SHORT TIME LATER

The Vendigum sits in a cosey high back chair MUNCHING on something again.

His little feet just about reach the end of the chair and bob along to:

"DANCE OF THE SUGAR PLUM FAIRY" - From The Nutcracker

Just past his feet is the bottom of a Christmas tree.

Looking gradually up the tree. It's decorated with lights but no decorations until we get to...

The horrifying decapitated head of Lucas hanging on the tree. A soldier's hat upon his head and a ripped open disjointed mouth...just like a Nutcracker.

FADE OUT