

DREAM MERCHANTS
Draft 5

By

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13/06/18

1 EXT.CITY STREET MARKET STALL - DAYTIME 1

A solitary rickety market stall randomly popped up in the middle of a busy street. There is a roguishly charming man (DEACON, middle aged man) bantering with an exhausted customer over his different wares. Meanwhile a distract young girl (Selena, a teenager) sits at the end of the table.

She is holding a half finished dream catcher; her fingers mindlessly weaves until she gives it up and drops it down to her lap. Across the street there are a trio of modern dressed teenage girls hanging out, giggling together.

CUT TO.

2 EXT. BEHIND MARKET STALL - SAME TIME 2

Around the back there is a woman sat, surrounded by crafty items and oddities. The mother (CORA, a middle aged woman) hums as she works - filling up a tiny bottle beside an ancient book. Her hand goes into the sack and draws out... nothing.

CUT TO.

3 EXT.CITY STREET MARKET STALL - SAME TIME 3

Deacon is holding out the little bottle temptingly to the exhausted customer. Beat. She caves and reluctantly hands over a few bills with a sigh before snatching a tiny bottle. Deacon counts the money when suddenly pain flares up and grips his shoulder. Pale with pain, he pulls out vial from his pocket, pops the cork an quickly drinks it's suspicious, shimmering contents.

Quickly the relief spreads across Deacon's face; he straightens up as he turns around only to see his wife there with a concerned expression and the empty sack. He drops the glass vial as he rushes over to Cora.

Selena is still distracted by those teenage girls when they notice her staring. They pause, staring back, when suddenly they all start laughing again. Flustered, Selena looks away, down at the ground where the rattle of a rolling glass vile on the ground grabs her attention. She curiously picks the bottle up and examines it closely. Glancing behind, she sees her parents huddled together in hushed whispers - clearly concerned.

CUT TO.

4

EXT. TRAVELLER CAMP - LATE AFTERNOON

4

Deacon quickly gathers up tools scattered about their campsite on the edge of town in a rundown urban space.

Just as Deacon is about to pick up a woven sack but pain tears through his shoulder and he doubles over. Cora rushes over to his side to help. There hint of a poisonous looking blackened scar peeking beneath his collar.

Silently pleading, Deacon looks up at his wife; reluctantly she hands him the sack and steps back. Taking a breath, he looks over to Selena who's just stood off to the side and watching in confusion. He considers the sack in his hands and, still kneeling, he unceremoniously thrusting the sack out to his daughter.

Hesitantly, Selena walks over to them. Her hand visibly trembling as she starts to reach out to the harvest bag when she looks up at her mother. Glassy eyed, Cora turns away but Deacon nods solemnly - she accepts it. Selena examines the sack in her hands in wonder as Deacon stiffly gets up and goes - what has she gotten herself into?

CUT TO.

5

EXT. TRAVELLER CAMP - EVENING

5

Cora paces restlessly as her family readies themselves to leave. When they are done, she embraces her husband before turning to Selena. Her eyes are worried, sad even, Selena's avoiding powerful glaze. Cora walks toward her and firmly raises Selena's face to look at her. BEAT.

Suddenly Cora pulls her daughter into a tight embrace, surprising Selena, and then all too quickly lets her go again. Deacon turns to leave, his strides long and purposeful while Selena reluctantly follows behind him away from the camp. Stoically Cora watches them walk away until they are out of sight and she drops down in tears.

CUT TO.

6

MONTAGE: THE JOURNEY TO THE STAR FIELDS

6

A) RUNDOWN URBAN TERRAIN - EARLY EVENING

Silently, Deacon quickly leads their way while Selena trails behind through the urban, concrete jungle.

B) EXT. ROAD - DUSK

They approach a solitary lamp post at the edge of a quiet road; Deacon instinctively stops her and checks for traffic. Selena quietly rolls her eyes at his safety paranoia but something catches her attention about the woods on the other side - something disquieting. Deacon

(CONTINUED)

starts to cross and Selena breaks free from her trance. She follows.

C) EXT. WOODS - DUSK

More walking amongst the trees as the evening light streams through the branches. They climb over fallen logs and roots as they venture deeper into this ancient forest. Darkness is growing deeper and Selena is growing more uncomfortable out in the wilderness; nervously looking side to side at every noise. A sudden animal's screech amongst the trees startles the girl and she hurries after her father - lest she be left behind.

END OF MONTAGE

7

EXT. THE STAR FIELDS - NIGHT

7

Deacon's stopped again, looking about cautiously about the darkness as Selena catches up. There is nothing but still his guard is up as he walks out into the field: his lantern a lonely light against the enveloping darkness. Selena looks around confused and crosses her foot over an invisible boundary...

... When suddenly many little lights flicker to life and start glowing in the grass. Stooping down to pick up one, Selena examines it closely: a fallen star.

Delighted, Selena impulsively starts to run off into the field when an abrupt *cough* breaks her trance. Turning around, she's faced with her father's stern face, glaring down at her while she stares back up with pleading eyes. Deacon caves, his expression softens slightly as he reluctantly nods his permission. A spark of glee crosses her face as she darts off to the nearest star - she grabs it up and, giggling, she runs to the next one. Even Deacon smiles at the sight of her joy but suddenly he grips his shoulder as that old pain flares up again. Deacon's smile fades as he looks cautiously about the darkness before starting his own harvest.

In her excitement, Selena is running around and picking up stars here and there while her father is working steadily behind her. But she's starting to get more careless the deeper she goes into the field - further away from her father. She stoops down to grab another one but suddenly finds a pair of feet beside the star.

Selena sharply looks up: there is a dark, hooded person (SHADOW MAN) is standing over her. His sudden presence is dark and menacing. Frightened, she starts to slowly back away; her feet keep tripping over the uneven ground, but she never taking her eyes off him. This creepy creature starts to follow her.

(CONTINUED)

She tries desperately to stay calm but her hands are trembling. One wrong footing and she falls down to the ground hard. Some stars spill out to the ground, scattering between her and the Shadow man.

The daughter watches in fear as one by one the closest fallen stars to the Shadow man start to spark and fizz before dying out with every step...

... He's getting closer; Selena's frozen in terror as the darkness presses closer around her.

Calculatingly, the Shadow man picks up a dead star with his long dust stained fingers. With a menacing gesture, he crushes it and blows the black dust in her face.

BEAT.

She's still paralyzed with fear as those blackened, twisted fingers reach out towards her; Threatening to pull her into darkness. He is inches mere away...

... Suddenly, her father appears out of the darkness. Something glows brightly in his hand and he throws it forcefully down to the ground. An intense blinding light explodes out of the star!

Rearing back in pain from the light, the Shadow man vanishes back into the dark. Wasting no time, Deacon stoops down to haul up his dazed daughter to her feet and, still clutching her harvest bag, they escape.

CUT TO.

8

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

8

Deacon is desperate as he runs through the forest. With a firm grasp on his daughter's wrist, he drags her behind as he navigates through a twisting maze of trees in the darkness. Selena tries to keep up, running flat out but her eyes are starting to grow heavy in the dim light.

Suddenly from behind comes an strange, eerily pounding footsteps echoing off the trees - chasing them. Deacon tries to pick up the speed as he pulls his dazed daughter along behind. But her feet stumble over the uneven ground as she tries to keep up. Her eyes start closing and jolting open again as she fights to stay away.

Some stars fall from her harvest sack while she runs and the lights dying as the Shadow man passes over them.

Growing more disorientated, Selena tries to keep running but her feet keeps stumbling over the dark, uneven ground. Her father keeps pulling her onwards when the chilling sound of the Shadow man unnatural shriek erupts from everywhere. Selena falters a moment, tripping slightly as her foot splashes in a puddle when...

(CONTINUED)

... a dust blacken hand suddenly reaches out of murky darkness behind her and grabs firmly hold of her shoulder. Her hand slips out of her father's grasp as the Shadow man drags her backwards into darkness.

CUT TO.

9

INT. NIGHTMARE - NIGHT

9

Selena is falling backwards into darkness: it's a manic mixture of rapid speed and slow motion shots as her arms and legs flail about. She tries frantically to grab at the light fringes of the waking world above her but it's disappearing fast - slipping away from her fingers. Just as she tries to grab the last strands of reality; horrible, twisted blacken hands lurch out of the surrounding shadows below, wrap around her and drag her deep down into darkness with a soundless scream...

... She slams against solid, dark ground with a thud. Beat. A pool of light streams down on her. Selena painfully pushes herself up off the dark ground only to find that there is nothing but darkness surrounding her. A faint whispering noise slowly starts bleeding through the silence around her (quiet at first but steadily growing louder).

Wildly, Selena looks about the darkness for an escape but there is nothingness. The light above her flickers off slightly. Beat. Silently a DARK FIGURE behinds to form in the shadows behind her. The Shadow Man.

As the noise continues to grow, Selena starts scooting backwards into the centre of the light as the darkness presses closer. Some stars have fallen from her pocket onto the ground - unseen. Again the light above flickers off and on.

Selena's safe haven of light is narrowing as the sounds. Terrified, she's curling up tight, making herself smaller and smaller, as the light above keeps going on and off. The large dark figure is silently looming gaint her - Selena's still unaware as she...

...shuts her eyes and clamps her hands over the ears to block it out. But the supernatural whispering and flickering lights keeps builds up to an unbearable crescendo.

The lights go out. Silence.

A laboured breathing noise fills the quiet along with Selena's own breathe. She's not alone. Paralysed with fear, the rancid breath tickles the back of her neck as the Shadow Man's gnarled, dusty black hand reaches for her, his victim...

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Gently, an ethereal sound cuts through everything: twinkling. Selena opens her eyes and there is tiny bright light floating in front of her - a star. Bathed in protective light, she gasps in awe and watches it floating upwards. Far above her there is a marvelous sky of stars - surrounding her in pulsating light.

All around her, more fallen stars start to float up, their glorious sound joining the stars choir. It's a wonderful sight as the levitating stars cast more dancing shadows. Selena looks around to see the Shadow Man cowering from the starlight he can't control. She understands now.

Filled with a renewed courage, Selena grabs the last of the stars on the ground. Holding them close to her heart, she closes her eyes and the pulsating light illuminating her calm face begins to grow stronger. Selena begins to slowly levitate up into the air with the stars. She reaches up to the stars above. Suddenly there is a blinding white.

CUT TO WHITE.

10

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

10

... She wakes up with a jolt, laying on the forest ground.

In front of her, Deacon struggles to hold off the Shadow Man from where she's collapsed. Scattered around her are fallen stars from her harvest bag - an idea comes to her. Shakily, Selena grabs a handful stars and gets up to her feet.

Deacon is clearly faltering now as he painfully drops to his knees while the Shadow man silently towers over Deacon; watching him from deep beneath his hood. He reaches out and the exhausted father weakly tries to strike his blackened hand away but the Shadow man easily stops it with his hand.

Slowly stooping down, the Shadow Man's putrid lips twist into a cruel, toxic sneer. Looking beneath the monster's hood, Deacon's eyes widen in fear. The Shadow Man's long, twisted black fingers hovers over Deacon's heart... ready to pierce.

Suddenly a glowing, dusty silvery white hand grabs Shadow man's exposed arm from the darkness. An unnatural cry of pain erupts from the creature as he viciously turns to face his assailant - Selena.

BEAT.

Her face pales with fear when she catches a glimpse of the face beneath the hood but she steels her determination. With all her courage, she slams the full bag of stars against him. There is an explosion of white light so strong that it blinds everything.

(CONTINUED)

As the brilliant light subsides, they suddenly are alone in the woods. Grabbing hold of her father, Selena pulls him up to his feet and they quickly make their escape.

CUT TO.

11 EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

11

Running out of the darkness, they are about to cross when suddenly Selena yanks her father back from the path of a speeding car. Reeling from his near miss, Deacon manages to nod at her gratefully before they push on.

CUT TO.

12 EXT. TRAVELLER CAMP - SAME NIGHT

12

Stumbling over the rough ground, they enter the camp. The bonfire is still blazing strongly against the night.

Selena sinks to her knees and looks at burnt sack: exhausted and disappointed. Deacon gently pats her on the back before he slowly limps away to bed but pauses when he sees the sleeping figure of his wife.

He turns back to his daughter and places his finger to his lips and Selena nods back in exhausted agreement. When he disappears, she glows with pride.

She settles down under the stars on the faded, old carpet but with adrenaline humming through her makes it impossible to sleep. As it gradually subsides, a dull pain stirs beneath where the dusty black hand print is burnt onto her skin; the Shadow man's touch.

Then she remembers something. Searching her pockets, she pulls out one shining star and holds it up to the sky above. A distant rustle from the darkness and the pain disturbs her. Looking up, there is a hint of the Shadow man lurking off in the darkness. But he comes no closer.

Selena smiles as she gently crushing the star and raises her hand to her lips. Taking a deep breath, she blows the shimmering dust out towards the Shadow man/camera.

FADE TO BLACK.