

Petropavlovsk's Dogs

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(c) 2025

FADE IN

EXT. KAMCHATKA KRAI - EVENING

In the gloom, a battered and filthy Lada rattles along a gravel road surrounded by a vast and desolate forest.

INT. LADA

The occupants are a middle-aged MAN and WOMAN.

MAN
This is supposed to be asphalt.

WOMAN
So you keep saying.

Man irritably rubs his close-cropped bleached hair.

MAN
At least it quit snowing.

He scratches his scalp again.

WOMAN
Holy fuck, put your wig back on.

MAN
That just makes it worse.

Woman shakes her head dismissively.

WOMAN
You look like a queer albino.

Woman turns away, stares out at the dark forest.

MAN
You look like an old Twizzler.

Woman's eyes fill with tears as she twists a long, gray streaked strand of her obviously dyed red hair.

MAN
Fuck it, I can't take this stink.

Frigid air blasts in as he winds his window down an inch.

WOMAN
Are you insane? It's freezing.

The car bounces hard as it hits a cluster of potholes.

MAN
Shut the fuck up, bitch.

He waves at several red jerry cans in the back seat.

MAN
I'm gonna pass out from the fucking
gas fumes.

WOMAN
Why did you bring so much of it?

Man gapes at her as if she is stupid or insane.

WOMAN
And do you think you could try not to
hit every single pothole?

A dense flurry of snow slams into the windshield.

MAN
Fuck.

He hurriedly closes the window as snow pours in.

MAN
We may have to stop soon.

WOMAN
We can't stop. We have to get to--

MAN
I know where we have to go, idiot.

WOMAN
My name is Sasha.

Man glances at her, confused.

MAN
No, you're Olga. I'm Sasha.

WOMAN
I want to be Sasha.

MAN
But that's a boy's name.

Woman glares at him.

WOMAN
Don't be ridiculous. My college
roommate was called Sasha and she
wasn't a boy, believe me.

MAN

Yeah, but in Russia it's a boy's name, genius. Your name is Olga.

WOMAN

I don't care. Olga sounds like the fucking cleaning lady.

The car slides a little on a curve.

MAN

Shit. We have to stop soon.

WOMAN

No way--

MAN

We been over this. I'm Sasha, you're Olga, we're teachers from--

WOMAN

What do you know about teaching?

MAN

Who gives a shit? It's only a cover.

WOMAN

Yeah, right. Like we'd make it through the first checkpoint.

MAN

Oh, wow. Great. Positive thinking.

Woman laughs.

WOMAN

And your Russian is dogshit.

Man hits the brakes and the car fishtails to a stop.

WOMAN

Goddammit--

Man peers through his window.

WOMAN

Why--

He rummages, finds a map and a flashlight.

WOMAN

What's the problem?

Man exits the car.

EXT. GRAVEL ROAD

Man slips, steadies himself as he approaches a road sign.

MAN

Hey, does that say Petropavlovsk?

He shines the light at it as Woman gingerly joins him.

WOMAN

Why did you stop? They said they
won't wait for us if we're late--

MAN

We're on the road to Petropavlovsk.

WOMAN

Bullshit. That's where we were.

MAN

You think I can't read a fucking map?
I fought in Iraq--

WOMAN

Oh, fuck off, who didn't?

Man stomps back towards the driver's seat.

MAN

Fuck you. Fuck Russia. I hate this
frozen shithole country.

WOMAN

Too late now. Better get used to it.

At the car, Man slips again and hits the road with a thud.

MAN

FUCK.

Woman watches him slowly rise.

WOMAN

Do Russians have the Purple Heart?

MAN

Just shut the fuck up, all right? I'm
not in the mood for your shit. We
gotta reach that silo and it's still
halfway the fuck across Siberia.

WOMAN

Hey, then maybe you shouldn't have
got us lost, huh?

INT. LADA

Man slams his door, turns to Woman as she takes her seat.

MAN

We got another zillion miles to go. I don't want to hear another word.

He puts the car in gear and it lurches, stalls.

MAN

This fucking third world shitheap.

Man turns the key, but nothing happens.

EXT. GRAVEL ROAD

It is blowing hard and snow is piling up on the car.

INT. LADA

Man grimly stares at the road as the car sits forlornly.

MAN

They called themselves a fucking superpower? What kind of superpower has roads this shitty? I seen goat trails better than this.

Woman pulls her jacket tighter around her.

MAN

How in fuck did we get turned around? I don't remember leaving the highway.

He turns the key again, but still nothing happens.

MAN

Great. Just great. We only had one chance left and what did we get? A fucking Lada. Well, we're fucked.

WOMAN

God, you're such a quitter.

Man spins, grabs her left wrist.

MAN

Shut the fuck up, or I swear to almighty God I will lay you out--

An intense spotlight beam blinds them.

EXT. GRAVEL ROAD - LATER

The Lada is surrounded by NATO and U.N. vehicles.

INT. ARMY TRUCK

Flanked by NATO SOLDIERS, Man is sitting on a bench in the back as an OFFICER climbs in.

OFFICER

How did you cross the Bering Sea?

Man avoids Officer's gaze.

MAN

(in halting Russian)

My name is Sasha. I am a school--

OFFICER

(in fluent Russian)

Please remove your clothes.

Man peers uncertainly, and Officer nods at the Soldiers.

OFFICER

Remove your clothes.

Man hesitates, so the Soldiers yank off his jacket and shirt, revealing many tattoos.

MAN

Get the fuck off me.

Officer compares Man's tattoos against a photograph.

OFFICER

Merely a formality, Mr. Hegseth. Ms. Gabbard already told us who you are.

Man stares grimly into space.

OFFICER

You're both now under arrest, and will be transported to The Hague.

He exits the truck.

EXT. GRAVEL ROAD - NIGHT

The abandoned Lada sits buried beneath a pile of snow.

FADE OUT