

Reboot

By

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FADE IN:

INT. HOTEL SUITE - EVENING

A modern and sparsely furnished hotel suite.

ARTHUR C. HAMMERSMITH shouts into a cellphone. He is a man who eats too much steak, drinks too much Cognac and smokes too many Cuban cigars to be this alive after 50 years.

ARTHUR

(into the phone)

I don't care what it is going to cost us, I want her in this picture. Are you going to do it? Or do I leave my honeymoon, fly two thousand miles and get her myself?

A KNOCK at the door.

ARTHUR

Honey, can you get the door?

ARTHUR

(into the phone)

You don't want that, believe me.

Another KNOCK.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

Room Service!

ARTHUR

(into the phone)

Just hold on a minute.

(to the door)

Come in will you!

(to the room)

Honey! Room service is here!

The door swings open. A pretty waitress enters. She wheels in a trolley laden with silver platters and Champagne.

ARTHUR

(into the phone)

I've gotta' go. Do the job you're paid for. Get her in this picture.

(beat)

Tell her we'll write a sex scene with Clooney for Christ's sake.

(beat)

I don't know! It can't be

ARTHUR
 difficult. We've put hundreds of
 them out of work, there must be
 someone we can get on the cheap. I
 can't walk up Sunset without
 stepping on homeless writers.

The waitress presents the check. Arthur signs and talks.

ARTHUR
 (into the phone)
 Just call me when it's done.

Call over, puts the phone down. The waitress waits, patient.

ARTHUR
 What do you want?
 (realization)
 Oh yeah, money. Always money.

Waitress squirms, embarrassed.

Arthur fumbles in his pockets, produces a handful of coins.
 Deposits them into the waitresses hand and guides her out of
 the room. He slams the door shut behind her.

He grabs a handful of French fries from the trolley and
 shoves them greedily into his fat mouth.

ARTHUR
 (with mouth full of fries)
 Chelsea, are you coming out of the
 bathroom at all tonight?

Arthur, no patience. Bathroom door. Yanks it open.

CHELSEA HAMMERSMITH. 24 years old, the ex-next big thing in
 Hollywood has a DIVERS KNIFE held against her neck. Her
 ASSAILANT stands behind her. He grins manically at Arthur.

Dressed in a black and yellow WET SUIT, patches of seaweed
 cling to the neoprene. Water drips from his body, a harpoon
 spear lodged in his back.

ASSAILANT
 (heavy Italian accent)
 Back up. Go sit on the bed.

Arthur steps back, slow, steady. Eyes not leaving Chelsea.

ASSAILANT
 Sit down on the bed!

Arthur obeys.

ARTHUR

I will give you anything you want.
I have money

ASSAILANT

I don't want your money.

ARTHUR

Then what do you want?

ASSAILANT

Your attention.

ARTHUR

You have it. Now please let her go.

Assailant, thinks for a moment. Should he let her go?

He thinks otherwise. Rips the knife through her jugular.
SPLOOSH, Chelsea's blood sprays like a fountain.

The Assailant drops her lifeless body to the floor.

ASSAILANT

That was for 'The Last Dance of the
Witch'. She stank in that.

ARTHUR

And so you just kill her? Because
she can't act? Oh my God! Who the
hell are you?

ASSAILANT

I think you know who I am.

ARTHUR

I don't know, I really don't.

ASSAILANT

I'm the man you have been ripping
off for years. The man who's entire
life's work you've been destroying
with your cheap and tacky garbage.

Arthur thinks. You can almost smell the grease burn as the
cogs turn in his head.

A glimmer. A flicker of recognition.

ARTHUR

R..R..R..Robertolini Mancini?

MANCINI
That wasn't so hard was it?

ARTHUR
But your D..D..D..D..Dead!

Robertolini Mancini -AKA The Master of Horror- spins around slowly for Arthur's benefit.

MANCINI
Of course I'm dead. You don't survive an accident like I had. Though it wasn't the spear that killed me you know. I actually drowned. If one of my idiot children had bothered to drag me out the water I would have lived.
(beat)
Instead they surfaced, scared. Went for help. Too late for me.

He pulls the spear from his back, tosses it on the floor.

MANCINI
They made me keep that in. Said it would be scarier. What do they know?

ARTHUR
Who?

MANCINI
(thinks for a moment)
Not important who they are. What is more important is that they dare tell the Master of Horror what is scary or not.

MANCINI
Amateurs.

Arthur jumps to his feet, runs to the door.

MANCINI
Where are you going?

Arthur, pauses, turns to Mancini.

ARTHUR
I'm leaving.

MANCINI

But how? There is no door.

Arthur looks back at where the door used to be.

Just a wall.

MANCINI

There are no doors in this room.
There are no windows. It is just us
now.

Arthur turns to face Mancini. His legs buckle. He drops to the floor with a HEAVY THUD.

INT. A WINDOWLESS, DRAB HOTEL ROOM.

The room looks different. A square box, a bed in the middle.

Arthur is on the bed in only his underwear. Ropes hold him down. He opens his eyes, checks out his surroundings.

ARTHUR

Tell me what you want?

Mancini holds a large set of scales in his hands. He places them down on the now empty room service trolley.

MANCINI

My pound of flesh.

ARTHUR

(sweating buckets)
Your what?

MANCINI

Well, to be more precise. A pound of flesh for each one of my films you have ruined with your tacky remakes.

Arthur, struggles. Kicks, flails. No use.

ARTHUR

You have got it all wrong. They play tribute to your original genius. They are an homage.

MANCINI

Homage? don't make me laugh. You know nothing about art. Nothing about Cinema. You're just a thief.

Mancini, knife in hand. He circles Arthur.

MANCINI
Where do I begin?

He wafts the knife through the air, conducting a symphony.

MANCINI
Eeny-meeny-miney-mo for the foot I
think we'll go.

Mancini strikes Arthur's right foot with the knife. Expertly dodging the spray of blood he cuts a large chunk free.

Arthur SCREAMS.

He tosses it into the scales with precision.

MANCINI
Mmm.. Just a bit over.
(smile at Arthur)
I'll owe you.

ARTHUR
Stop! Please stop.

MANCINI
Why should I?

Mancini circles again, like a vulture. Grabs an ear, hacks it off. Arthur SCREAMS again.

He throws the ear into the scales. Not enough. He takes a few fingers, adds them to the scales. A couple more, seems satisfied now.

Blood is everywhere. Mancini doesn't avoid the spray this time, blood droplets cover him. Arthur CRIES like a child.

ARTHUR
Help! Someone please help!

Mancini stops, amused.

MANCINI
Nobody is coming. No-one can save
you here. What? You think Sarah
Michelle Gellar will come jumping
through the wall to save your sorry
ass?
(smile)
Not this movie.

Back to work, The knife dances around Arthur once more.

ARTHUR

Stop! Look, I admit it. But It's not just me, it's all about money now. It's not the same as when you were around.

MANCINI

Why not? Nobody wants to make art anymore?

ARTHUR

Yes, well no. I don't know. I am hardly the only one. Look at Tarantino, he has been getting away with it for years.

MANCINI

No! You are nothing like Tarantino.

ARTHUR

What makes you so sure?

Mancini plunges the knife into Arthur's abdomen. His hand enters the gaping wound and pulls out a handful of guts.

Is it worth mentioning that Arthur SCREAMS at this? Maybe from this point you should take it for granted that Arthur finds this entire process quite painful and thus screams a rather lot for the duration.

MANCINI

Because at least Tarantino has passion. He at least is an artist. He may re-use ideas but he does it with love for the genre.

(beat)

You do it just for the money.

Mancini throws Arthur's intestines into the scales.

MANCINI

That was for The Seventeen Corpses of Hell.

ARTHUR

That's wrong! I love the cinema! I have passion for the genre.

MANCINI

You forget I have seen all your movies. We have a theater in Hell you know. We have screenings every day at the Uwe Boll Regal.

MANCINI
(beat)

Don't speak to me about passion.

Mancini brings down the knife. A large section of thigh.

MANCINI
'The Bloodthirsty Bandito's'.

Arthur is writhing in agony.

ARTHUR
Stop! Stop! You win.

Mancini stops. Interested. Intrigued.

MANCINI
I do?

ARTHUR
Yes. I'll stop. I promise.

Mancini in Arthur's face.

MANCINI
No more?

ARTHUR
No more remakes.

MANCINI
How can I trust your word?

Arthur, pleading. Imploring.

ARTHUR
I swear, please let me live.

Mancini scratches his head. Should he believe him?

A pause. Decision time.

Mancini brings the knife down and cuts the ropes.

MANCINI
You have your chance.

Somewhere a CELLPHONE RINGS.

Arthur, grateful eyes.

ARTHUR

Thank you.

The CELLPHONE still rings.

INT. HOTEL SUITE - MORNING

Arthur wakes up in his bed.

Next to him is Chelsea.

CHELSEA

Will you answer that!

Arthur jumps up. He looks at Chelsea. Looks to the RINGING PHONE. Picks it up. Listens. Deep in thought.

ARTHUR

(into the phone)

I've changed my mind. I don't want her anymore.

(beat)

I know but things have moved on. we are canceling the movie.

Arthur slides out of bed, still on the phone.

ARTHUR

(into the phone)

It's okay. I had a vision last night. I have a new idea.

(beat)

No, listen. Picture it. A small town on the coast. A holiday resort. There is a Sheriff. A family. A killer shark--

(beat)

No, it is not a remake.

(beat)

No, it's a...It's a Re-boot. That's it! A REBOOT. Can't you see? JAWS BEGINS. It's a hit! Get Geller on the phone and then call me back.

Arthur, invigorated. Picks up a half smoked Cuban and lights it, takes a deep puff.

A spring in his step, he heads for the bathroom.

FADE OUT: