

CAPITAL "D"

Fantasy, Drama

Animated Short Film, 7 minutes

Written by

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EXT. THE BLACK DESERT - TWILIGHT

The bottom looks like dry ink, black sand which actually consists of letters. We see the title of the film:

INSERT: TITLE "CAPITAL D"

The sky is of a lighter grey. No sun, no clouds. A MAN (30) lies on the ground, asleep. He wears a striped pajama. He wakes up, rubs his eyes, looks around, disoriented.

MAN

Not again.

Most of the time we hear his voice as voice over in a film noir style:

MAN (V.O.)

I wake with only a faint memory in my head: "Three tasks", the wise man said. "Three tasks", he said, in his understanding voice. "Three tasks, before you can leave this realm."

As he speaks, a shiver runs through the letters around him. They begin to move and rearrange to words: "faint m.mory", "t.. wise man s..d", "b.fore y.u l..ve th. re.lm". "Three tasks" rises and dances in front of him. We see the words mirrored at first, then legible from an overshoulder perspective. The man waves the letters away like flies.

MAN

Little fuckers.

Letters arrange themselves to the words "Little fuckers." The man gets up, looks about.

MAN (V.O.)

The black desert. This is where information sinks into oblivion and dies. -- Syllables. Phrases. Buzzwords.

We take a closer look at the bottom and see fragments of words and sentences in the middle of piles of letters and syllables: "collateral", "rofl", "lord, won't you", "roi", "smooth as silk", "#fail #wtf", "nutritious and wholesome", "30% less", "hyperc..nectivity", "war on words", "global", "my n..ber, so c.ll m. .aybe", "most pl.yfu. kitten", "and a gu..i necklace", "scores in overtime", and so forth. As we close in, the words whisper to us, sentences blending into each other, like switching the channels on a detuned radio.

MAN (V.O.)

I hate this place. So desperate.  
Letters cling on to me like  
starlets to fame, hoping for  
someone to give them meaning. --  
They join, rearrange and fall  
apart, unstable molecules.

Words and letters whirl around the man as if he stood in the  
eye of a literary hurrican. They climb up his legs, cover his  
body, threaten to overpower him.

MAN (V.O.)

Donthinkdonthinkdonthink. \*-\*

(beat)

Fuckfuckfuckfuckfuckfuck. FUCK!  
It doesn't work! They weigh me  
down, cover me, bury me. Lost  
memories, suppressed emotions and  
yesterday's news. Black noise, and  
then -- just black.

Words, letters, sentences cover the man until the whole  
screen is black. Then silence. Suddenly, his fist shoots up  
like a zombie rising.

MAN (V.O.)

No! -- Not like that. -- Rage! That  
works, too.

He emerges from the darkness like a drowning man from  
quicksand. He gets up, screaming, cursing, shaking word  
fragments off like insects, in an almost comical mixture of  
rage and disgust. He frees his leg from the "euro crisis" and  
"palestine", stomps an "old love affair" and begins to run,  
apathetic, scattering letters and syllables all about.

EXT. THE WHITE MOUNTAINS - TWILIGHT

He reaches the border of the black desert and with it the  
foothills of a chain of white mountains. Only then he stops  
to catch his breath.

MAN (V.O.)

Too close.

Behind him, the black desert is still in uproar. Sentences  
leash out like tentacles, but can't reach him anymore. The  
man continues on his way. He walks through white mountains,  
but doesn't really climb. His path is even, while around him  
the rock walls rise higher and higher. He passes a couple of  
signs, that read: "STOP! YES, YOU!", "DANGER!", "BEWARE!",  
"NO TRESPASSING", "WARNED YOU!", "LAST CHANCE!" and so on.  
The man slows down.

EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE - TWILIGHT

He turns a corner and in front of him a cave appears, while the warning signs continue. Another sign above its entrance reads (in a silent horror movie font): INSIDE: MONSTER!

The man gets more and more disheartened with every step, until he finally comes to a halt.

MAN (V.O.)

No! Not this! Please? Please...?

He turns around and looks back on the way he came from, meandering downwards. He's already surprisingly high above and has a wide view across the mountain range and back on the black desert. Clearly there's only two options to go: Back or onwards. He's torn between his choices, overpowered by fear and despair. He squats down and whimpers. The last word he speaks out aloud:

MAN

Please...?

LETTER I (O.S.)

Oh shut it, willya? Some people try to sleep! -- Gawddamn sissy!

The man looks up in surprise, but there is no one else. Then he feels something in his back, fumbles with his trousers and pulls the LETTER I from his buttcrack. It wiggles, caught between two fingers by the scruff of the neck.

LETTER I (CONT'D)

(furious)

Put me down! -- I swear to gawd I bitecha!

It snaps at him, but can't reach his fingers.

MAN

An "I"?

LETTER I

Damn right! An eye for an eye!

The man carefully puts the letter down in front of him, shielding himself with the other hand, just in case.

MAN

No no! Sorry. I meant you. You're an "I"...

LETTER I

A CAPITAL I, ya moron! Capital!

MAN

No need to be rude! You clung on to me, not the other way round!

LETTER I

Who, I? To a sorry ass like yours?  
Oh, please! Dontcha get any ideas,  
bub, willya? I don't need anyone!  
I speak for myself!

It proudly hops away in the direction they came from.

LETTER I (CONT'D)

(to itself)

Hah! Cling on to a wuss like that.

MAN (V.O.)

It puffs its serifs affectedly and  
hops away. But not without a last  
insult.

LETTER I

(over shoulder)

Man the fuck up!

And indeed: After a moment of hesitation the man straightens himself.

MAN

(to himself)

Alright. Alright alright. You can  
do it. Phew.

He grabs a heavy rock and enters the cave, determined.

INT. CAVE - ETERNAL NIGHT

Inside it's dark. The man walks through the darkness for some time, unsure, disoriented. Suddenly the monster begins to speak. Its voice seems to come from no particular direction.

MONSTER (O.C.)

I can smell you, you know? You reak  
of fear.

A pair of large eyes appears behind the man. They disappear as he spins around, reappearing - again behind him: Like the Cheshire Cat.

MONSTER (CONT'D)

Fear and doubt and self loathing.  
Just how I like it. I'll --

In panic the man spins all around. He throws the rock somewhere, without even aiming. It hits home.

MONSTER (CONT'D)

OUCH! FUCK!

The MONSTER emerges from the darkness, rubbing its head. It is a massive, muscular, black, hairy and generally frightening creature with large teeth and claws. However, it has human eyes of the same color and appearance as the man. Even on all fours it overtowers him by thrice his size. The man averts its gaze and protects himself with his arms. It extends a pan-sized paw, holding the tiny rock between two claws. It speaks with a British accent, like Bane in Batman.

MONSTER (CONT'D)

Are you nuts? Do you think that's funny, huh? Throwing rocks at people! In my own bloody house!! -- Quite venturous for such a puny fellow!

(beat)

What are you supposed to be anyway?

It drags the man to his feet by hooking the extended claw of its pinky under his armpit.

MONSTER (CONT'D)

Is this --

(chuckles, probes an arm)

-- is this what I think it is?

MAN (V.O.)

A talkative monster. The worst kind.

MONSTER

And here?

(pinches his side)

Didn't get much exercise lately, did we now, chicken legs? -- What a sorry waste of airspace. --

I mean, please? What is this??? --

(examines him up and down)

Doesn't anyone care about my nutrition?

The man only stands there, eyes on the ground and endures the offenses like a berated pupil. The monster circles him calmly. There's no escape now anyway.

MONSTER (CONT'D)

Tell me. When was the last time you got laid, huh? -- Buried the hobbit? --

(quietly, close to his ear)

Shook your tree? --

(mimes intercourse)

A little cucumber rumba? Shagalag? Schwingelingdong?

MAN  
 (quietly, looking down)  
 Shut up.

MONSTER  
 (threatening)  
 What was that?

It comes closer, calm, dangerous, until it breaths down on the man.

MAN  
 (angry, between his teeth)  
 I said: Shut the fuck up!

For the first time the man looks up. He pushes the monster away, which works surprisingly well considering its size. It stumbles a few steps back and almost loses its balance. Did it become a little smaller?

MONSTER  
 Well, well, well. Who would've thought. The milktoast found its balls.

MAN  
 (now calm)  
 I'm not afraid of you.

MONSTER  
 Oh I beg to differ.

It approaches with one quick leap, roars terrifyingly, right into his face and raises its claws. The man looks away, protecting himself against the spittle. But he doesn't back down anymore. As the roaring is finished he looks right into its eyes. Now it becomes evident that they are exactly the same. They stand nose to nose, the monster still towering over him, a staring contest. Then the man raises one hand and touches the snout of the monster softly, appeasingly. The monster flinches, surprised, but then it allows the touch.

MAN  
 It's okay.  
 (beat)  
 It's okay.

He leans his forehead against the monster's snout. It wiggles a little, but he holds it close until it quiets down. It shrinks more and more. The man whispers quiet, soothing words into its ears. Its breath becomes slower, deeper, until finally it is calm and tame. The monster has shrank to the size of a dog and rests its head in the man's lap, looking up at him with big eyes, as he strokes it.

MAN (V.O.)  
 I wish I could take it with me, but that's just not how it works.  
 (MORE)

MAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

-- When we finally say our goodbyes, I feel a whiff of regret, a warm and almost soothing melancholia. In another time, another life, we could've been friends.

The man leaves the dog/monster and continues on his way.

EXT. CAVE/OPPOSITE SIDE - TWILIGHT

The man exits the cave on the other side. But there are only a couple of meters more to go until he reaches an abyss. It looks almost clinical and stretches as far as the eye can see: rectangled, smooth, with no bumps or protrusions.

MAN (V.O.)

Great. Just great. Three tasks my ass.

The man gets down on his knees and crawls towards the edge. He probes the surface of the rock with his palm. No chance to climb that.

MAN (V.O.)

Now what? Jump? Grow fucking wings?

He sits down, his feet dangling over the edge. Time passes.

MAN (V.O.)

How long has it been? An hour? A day? A decade? Time is null and void in this place.

His stomach growls. The man looks down. Then he starts to search his pajama pockets for something to eat. He produces a jar of cookies (too big for his pockets) with a sticker on it that says: "EAT ME."

MAN (V.O.)

Of course! "Just in case.", he said! Just in case.

The man opens the jar and takes a hearty bite. Like Alice in Wonderland he begins to grow, or the rocks around him begin to shrink, or maybe both.

FADE TO:

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

The man sits on the edge of his bed, the open jar still in his hands, but much smaller now. It contains pills, the label reads "PROZAC®, Fluoxetine Hydrochloride". The man puts it aside and gets up. He walks over to the window, opens the shutters and lets the sunshine in. A brand new day.