DRAGON'S TONGUE

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. FOGGY ROAD - DAY

A white SUV drives along a cement road stretching across a DESOLATE SWAMPLAND, which would be all we see on all sides, except an impenetrable fog has settled on the landscape.

The car parks in the very center of this invisible limbo. After a moment, the door on its side slides open, and a MAN IN CAMO (VICTOR, 30s) is thrown out by its obscured passengers.

The door shuts behind him, and the SUV drives off forwards, leaving him there on the ground. As he stands up slowly, we can see that both his ears have been removed - blood stains his jacket from the gruesome wounds.

The Earless Man looks off in the direction the car took. He turns, his face numb and expressionless, mouth open, trying to suck down the misty air.

TEXT: *The year is 2027. Eastern Europe.*

EXT. SWAMPLAND WAREHOUSE BALCONY - DAY

An older woman in a white business suit stands smoking on the terrace of a multi-floor garage warehouse, her hair cut short. This is JEZEBEL BLANC (60s). She surveys the foggy swamp road before her and the returning white SUV.

The vehicle makes its return to the garage doors below her, which slowly creak open. Once it’s inside, she heads back in.

INT. SWAMPLAND WAREHOUSE - DAY

The vehicle’s occupants emerge, one by one. First, a larger man with a wine-soaked nose who wears a little beret hat - SUET ROY (40s). He is followed by a young boy in a blue sweater that has an elephant sewn on it - LITTLE MACDONALD (10).

The driver gets out after them - GINGER LAZLO (20s) a man with an impressive blonde forked beard, muttonchop whiskers, and hair down to his shoulders. He looks up at Jezebel, who approaches the group.

GINGER LAZLO
We dropped him.

JEZEBEL BLANC
Good. Once he activates the beacon, we'll know where the rest of them are.

LITTLE MACDONALD
And *boom, boom!*

SUET ROY
That's right, kiddo.

Suet Roy takes out a new toy from the SUV: a rocket launcher. Little Macdonald jumps, with his fist punching the air.

EXT. FOGGY ROAD - DAY

Victor takes out a military watch from a pocket on his jacket. The time is 16:29. He looks up to the clouds, a small black spot descends from the grey void.

It's a high-impact resin case, attached to a parachute. Swirling in the humidity, it nears a drop point directly in front of Victor, and gently lands at his feet. The symbol on the box is that of a dragon made of gemstones, the beast's tongue encircling its body and wings.

Victor takes a deep breath, crouching and opening it. Inside are supplies, a water bottle, packaged rations - and a weaponized drone with a remote controller. He carefully takes out the drone, and activates it with a sequence of buttons.

Using the controller, the drone lifts above the ground with a buzzing noise. Victor appears wonderstruck by his gizmo. He uses the joysticks to fly it further up into the air, and drifts across the sky in a clear line - down the SUV's road.

INT. SWAMPLAND WAREHOUSE - DAY

Little Macdonald, Suet Roy, and Ginger Lazlo all sit around a crate playing cards and gambling with bullet casings.

SUET ROY
Do you remember the Wyvern?

GINGER LAZLO
Like it was yesterday.

SUET ROY
I loved that little place. Only downside was, you could never get relaxation there. Always people like Blanc coming along with jobs.

GINGER LAZLO
You regret taking it?

SUET ROY
Hell no. It’s gonna pay off.

LITTLE MACDONALD
Pay off, pay off!

GINGER LAZLO
Where did you find the kid?

SUET ROY
His mother thought he needed discipline. So, I offered to take him along for the next contract.

The three start to laugh, stopping once Jezebel Blanc reappears, holding a sniper rifle. She pretends to aim it at the group.

JEZEBEL BLANC
It’s important for you all to remember that this job is no...laughing matter.

GINGER LAZLO
Is that from the shipment we took in?

Blanc admires the rifle, its scope, its sleek chrome finish.

JEZEBEL BLANC
State-of-the-art. Barring any further interruptions, we’ll be on schedule to leave this place by 18:00.

The gang and her turn to look at a computer screen with a honing beacon, that beeps as it scans a digital perimeter for new signals.

EXT. FOGGY ROAD - DAY

Victor’s drone lowers back down to him, resting on the ground. Crouching back to the package, he takes out a new item - a tactical radio device. He switches it on.

INT. SWAMPLAND WAREHOUSE - DAY

A signal appears on the computer, a tiny red dot.

JEZEBEL BLANC
Now, wait for their response.

The group are all on tenterhooks.

EXT. FOGGY ROAD - DAY

Victor's drone takes flight once again, and flies off in the direction of the warehouse, now with a new attachment. Victor's radio beeps with an incoming signal.

INT. SWAMPLAND WAREHOUSE - DAY

As they wait, staring at the monitor, there is a THUNDEROUS NOISE, and suddenly the glass on the building windows SHATTERS! Shards rain down on the SUV, table, and weapons crates, and the ceiling SHAKES from the impact of a strike.

GINGER LAZLO
Get down!

They all rush for cover as concrete chunks fall from above - Ginger Lazlo shields Jezebel from a steel beam that nearly takes them out.

Suet Roy and Little Macdonald overturn one of the crates, and immediately grab large rifles in the chaos. Little Macdonald looks up through a shattered window - seeing the hovering drone, a red light shining from it that aims the crosshair.

The boy aims his rifle at the drone, about to pull the trigger at the flying menace...

A shot is fired from the drone, and Little Macdonald's head is EXPLODED. Suet Roy shouts in anger.

SUET ROY
They killed him!

GINGER LAZLO
Stay low Roy, we've got to take that thing out!

Lazlo turns to a visibly stunned Jezebel.

GINGER LAZLO (CONT'D)
Didn't see this coming, did you?

She says nothing. Lazlo and Roy both look up, as the shadow of a drone moves in a straight line across each shattered window, scoping out the perimeter of the building for its next target.

Suet Roy shoots at it as it passes another window. Terrible miss. Another shot comes from the drone, which explodes a patch of floor nearby Roy.

SUET ROY
Enough of that!

A door on the side of the garage entrance CREAKS OPEN. They all look towards it, and see Victor standing there, nonchalantly holding the drone remote, looking frightfully imposing in the sunset light that engulfs the grey space.

Lazlo rushes up beside Roy, and they both shoot at Victor, who grabs the steel door and slams it again, blocking their bullets.

GINGER LAZLO
Wait.

They are both side by side. In the background, the drone's shadow is once again seen. Another shot fires from it, and it explodes directly into the hearts of both Lazlo and Roy in unison. Their bodies fall, gasping, clutching their rifles like toys.

Victor reenters. He looks around cautiously. We can see now that he has replaced his missing ears with STEEL PROSTHETIC EARS. His mouth is agape, and he breathes heavily.

Jezebel is nowhere to be seen.

JEZEBEL BLANC (O.S.)
Over here, Dragon's Tongue.

He can't possibly hear her, but on instinct, turns regardless. She stands brandishing the rocket launcher, fully loaded and aimed at Victor.

JEZEBEL BLANC (CONT'D)
All of this couldn't have been worth it.

Victor opens his mouth wider to SNARL - he has no tongue either. Jezebel's face is disgusted.

All at once, **BOOM.** She fires the rocket at the exact moment Victor triggers the drone. Jezebel is hit in the heart, and Victor is obliterated in a MASSIVE BLAST that destroys the entire side of the warehouse.

The smoke slowly clears. All that is left of both opponents are ashes.

Then, VOICES. A TEAM OF OPERATIVES wearing vests displaying the dragon symbol seen on Victor's case approach the rubble and bodies through the blown-apart wall, stepping over debris and smoky cement.

They approach a large red spot, where the drone sits, broken. One of the operatives removes his headgear. He also has steel ears, and is mute. He picks up the drone's bits and pieces.

Speaking is tricky without a tongue, but he gasps the words:

DRAGON'S TONGUE OPERATIVE
Here - nex - tahget - two mile away.

The rest of the group nod. They turn to leave, packing up what remains of the weapons crates, and strapping them to their equipment. Onto the next fight.

FADE OUT.