

The slavic queen

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INT. WANDA'S PALACE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

HARPER, COLT, and several other AMERICAN SOLDIERS in pilot uniforms walk down a long, dark corridor. Beside them walk two COSSACKS--JAREMA and TARAS. They carry sabers.

A woman walks ahead. In a dress. With a lot of jewelry. Under gold bracelets and pendants, she hides the scars of heavy shackles.

The Americans walk in silence, exchanging only glances.

They stop. Koietta opens the door. She steps aside. She makes way for them.

WOMAN

We know you have your own rules  
regarding moments like these. We  
will respect each other. You have  
one hour. The Queen will inform you  
of your arrival.

The Americans go inside. The door closes behind them. The woman leaves. Jarema and Taras remain by the door.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

Harper places her bag on a chair. Colt throws his bag on the bed. A drawing falls out. It has a dragon and a princess on it. Harper quickly puts the drawing back in her bag. She pulls out the garnient bag.

The rest of the Americans stare at Harper, waiting for his first move.

COLT

This looks like the fortress of the  
queen of the world. Not a terrorist  
base.

HARPER

What other word would you use to  
describe a woman who sparked a  
revolt in Russian intelligence,  
rounded up the best agents, led  
them to this temple of power, and  
placed the crown on her head  
without asking anyone for their  
opinion?

(CONTINUED)

COLT  
The Empress.

HARPER  
Wherever it goes, it spreads  
destruction. It burns villages. It  
burns military bases. Most ships  
disappear in its seas. Planes fall  
from its skies. Its steppes tremble  
with the hooves of horses. Her  
influence reaches from Moscow to  
Constantinople. If no one reacts,  
we will have a much stronger enemy  
than Russia.

COLT  
Since when are we afraid of  
terrorists?

Harper pulls out her dress uniform. She places it on the  
back of a chair in front of a large mirror. She stares at  
her reflection for a moment.

HARPER  
We're not afraid of it. We're just  
careful not to let it burn down  
everything we love.

COLT  
Maybe she's the only one who has  
the courage to stick to her  
decisions no matter what?

HARPER  
Just don't fall in love.

COLT  
Why are we the only ones coming to  
her? Without the aircraft carrier.  
Without the rest of the military.  
If she's so dangerous?

HARPER  
This woman has a serious problem  
with Russia. She's unleashed a hell  
beyond her control. That's why  
we're going to help her. Because  
only we know how to keep Russia in  
check. And we'll save the world  
once again.

( CONTINUED )

COLT  
And then what?

HARPER  
There will be peace. And my F-18s  
will land in front of this palace.

COLT  
I'm not the best at talking. I'm  
better at flying. What am I doing  
here?

HARPER  
You're growing up.

Harper buttons up the last few buttons. He looks like the  
symbol of the American military.

INT. WANDA'S PALACE - NIGHT

The great hall hums with low, resonant drums. Shadows dance  
on ancient stone walls lit by open flames. The smell of  
woodsmoke, sweat, and salt lingers in the air.  
Guests stand in silence, encircling the fire. At its center  
- WANDA (30s) dances.  
Her body moves like a weapon forged in rhythm -- precise,  
grounded, elemental.  
Twin torches in her hands carve arcs of flame. She doesn't  
smile. She doesn't perform.

She claims the room.  
Doors open behind. THE AMERICANS enter -- six of them, led  
by COLONEL HARPER. Tall, confident, calculating. Behind him:  
Ely "COLT" (30s). Quiet, observant. The youngest in the room  
-- but the only one who doesn't shift his weight.  
Wanda spins once more. One last burst of flame.  
And then--she stops.  
Turns.  
Walks straight toward them.  
The torches still burn in her hands.  
She halts a few feet in front of the Americans.  
Everyone holds their breath.  
Wanda's eyes scan the group like a hawk choosing its prey.  
She lifts both burning torches----then throws them hard at  
the ground, directly in front of the group.  
FLAMES ERUPT.

The Americans instinctively step back--  
--except Colt.

He doesn't move.  
Wanda watches. Silently.

(CONTINUED)

HARPER  
Queen Wanda. On behalf of the  
United States and our allies, we  
thank you for this welcome.

Wanda doesn't turn to him. She doesn't even blink. She steps  
past the flames. Stops in front of Colt.

WANDA  
You didn't move.

COLT  
Didn't think if I should.

WANDA  
Because you're brave?

COLT  
Because you were watching.

A beat. The drums go silent.

WANDA  
And yet you're not the one  
speaking.

Wanda glances of Harper. Finally.

WANDA  
Send your message in writing.  
I don't talk business on nights  
like this.

She turns her back to them.

WANDA  
But you can stay. Watch.  
If you're brave enough to keep your  
eyes open.

She disappears into the hall.

Harper stiffens. Colt watches her go -- something pulling in  
his chest like gravity made personal.

INT. SALA NARAD - NIGHT

Thick stone walls. An uneven circle of old warriors -  
hardened men with blades on their hips and smoke in their  
breath. The room hums with tension. Voices overlap, sharp,  
impatient.

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The heavy door creaks open. Silence falls like snow. Wanda enters - her cloak still smelling of ash, her presence cutting through the room like a blade. She doesn't ask to speak.

WANDA  
Who let them in?

JAREMA  
I thought kings didn't ask. They know.

WANDA  
I know. They smell like a gasstation, iron, fire...like a war.

TARAS  
And you dance for they...like a whole!

Wanda is angry. She hits her hands on the table. Her eyes are cold.

WANDA  
I am not your sister. I am not your mother. I am not your wife. I am not your mit. I am your queen. And you need told to me like to your queen.

TARAS  
And a queen who dances for the enemy... What kind of queen is that?

WANDA  
One that the enemy will not dare to touch.

I am a fire. I am a war...but you told me, they want a peace...they want help us with Russia.

JAREMA  
They said it was a peacekeeping mission. I believed you should see them before they built an airport here.

WANDA  
I do not accept guests who bring peace in uniform.

( CONTINUED )

JAREMA

Maybe you'll at least listen to them?

WANDA

Why?

TARAS

Because maybe they actually want to protect you?

WANDA

I am slavic girl. I don't need protection. Especially not from America. You were supposed to protect this country. And you can't even make a single good decision... as usual, it all falls on me.

Wanda exits.

INT. WANDA'S PALACE - NIGHT

Americans stand near the wall. They look at slavic dancers. They're in shock. Colt looks with passion and love. He likes magic in this place.

COLT

Do we know their protocol?

HARPER

They don't have a protocol.

Wanda appears behind a large wooden table. Other women appear next to Wanda. They're talking about something with serious expressions. After a moment, they disperse around the room. One stands before the Americans.

Several people fall silent. Loud drums begin to roll. It's as if the entire environment is reacting to her presence.

Jarema and Taras come in behind Wanda. They wait.

WANDA

We don't talk over empty glasses. We don't negotiate in silence. We don't stand by the wall when we could be sitting by the fire.

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Wanda smiles broadly. Seductively. She shifts her energy from warrior to lover. She's still a queen. But a bit gentler. She gestures for the Americans to join her at her table. Jarema and Taras, dissatisfied, move away from her. They make room to her right and left.

WANDA

You're welcome. To my table.

Today - we celebrate peace and  
friendship.

Wanda sits down. Harper and Colt sit near her.

WANDA

We rarely receive visitors from  
heaven. Are the stars whispering to  
you about urgent matters right now?

HARPER

Our country believes that if we  
join forces, we will defeat the  
empire once and for all.

WANDA

Will we win? What's next?

HARPER

There will be peace.

WANDA

There will be peace under the  
Star-Spangled Banner. No more wild  
steppes. No more Slavic fire. No  
more freedom or other kingdoms.  
There will be only... America.

HARPER

The most beautiful peace you can  
dream of will come.

COLT

And what if all this remains? Wild  
horses in the steppe, running with  
wild men? A breath of freedom in  
your hair. The sea breeze against  
the palace walls. None of us knows  
how to illuminate the night on the  
steppe. No one but you.

WANDA

What do you know about wild horses  
and the people of the steppes? Why  
do you want to help me?

(CONTINUED)



HARPER

Because if we don't, Russia will come visit you again. And this time, there will be no turning back.

WANDA

I know the breath of Russia. I know how to protect myself from her wrath. I know how to rule her children. I don't know America. And I trust her as much as I would trust an evil queen in a fairy tale.

The women place vodka on the table. Lots of it. Wanda watches happily as they pour it into glasses. Harper remains firm, unfazed. He's thinking hard. Colt tries to remain serious, but... they're starting to feel comfortable in this place. And it shows.

WANDA

And you? You don't strike me as a treaty man. More like someone who knows how to hold the reins.

COLT

We have a saying that horses don't listen to words--only to energy. It's similar with countries.

Jarema laughs.

JAREMA

You know nothing about horses.

WANDA

Jarema...

JAREMA

Horses are as wild as the wind in the steppe. Until you've slept with them, galloped with them, and drank from the same stream... you know nothing about them.

COLT

In Texas, we are born and die with horses. We sleep with them under one sky. We harness the wind together. We are one. We understand each other without words and drink from many streams.

(CONTINUED)

WANDA

And so we moved from serious  
politics to horses. Again.

COLT

Maybe this is our thread of  
understanding.

Colt is exceptionally confident. He speaks with courage and ease. He remains fascinated and enchanted by these people. Harper looks as if he's just achieved his goal.

Someone begins to sing. The company gathered in the hall dances. Women and men dance with fire, sing, drink vodka... dancers approach the table. They seduce the guests with their movements and torches.

Wanda bursts out laughing. She gestures for Harper to leave the table with one of the dancers.

WANDA

And I told you not to talk politics  
at the table. Let's have some fun.  
Everyone. If we feel like it.

COLT

And you... how do you feel like  
having fun today?

EXT. BALCONY - NIGHT

Wanda stands at the stone railing of the terrace. She stares at the sky. She thinks she's alone... but Colt appears behind her. Alone. Unaccompanied. He watches her as she removes her mask and becomes exceptionally real.

COLT

Yet there is more truth in fairy  
tales than I have been told.

WANDA

This isn't a fairy tale. This is  
reality.

Colt notices Wanda's pendant. In the shape of a dragon. He quickly looks away from it. He tries to look Wanda in the eye. Wanda keeps looking away.

COLT

Even here the dragon guards the  
princess.

(CONTINUED)

WANDA  
I'm not a princess.

COLT  
In our fairy tales, dragons are  
killed to free the princess.

WANDA  
Here we learn to live with them.  
And I am a queen, not a princess.

Wanda steps away from the railing. Colt grabs her hand.  
Quickly. Firmly. After a moment, he lets go. But he achieves  
his goal. Wanda stops. She gives him her attention. Wanda  
notices cufflinks in the shape of airplanes.

WANDA  
I have the impression that for you  
a plane is not just a plane either.

COLT  
My mother always said that freedom  
has wings.

Wanda smiles.

WANDA  
She must be a very wise woman.

Colt notices the birthmark on her back. A seared,  
eagle-shaped mark peeks out from beneath the fabric of her  
dress. He runs his fingers over it. Without question. As if  
he didn't need permission.

Wanda steps away from him. Turns to face him. Raises her  
head high. She is herself again. Untouchable. Unreachable.  
Cold.

COLT  
Who did this to you?

WANDA  
The one who once thought he owned  
me.

COLT  
Slave markets? I thought it was  
just a story...

WANDA  
In your country, everything is just  
a story. And here we have to deal  
with it.

(CONTINUED)

COLT

I don't believe...They told me you  
were a Russian agent. Not a slave.

WANDA

You only believe what you want to  
believe.

Wanda walks toward the door. She stops at the door, though.  
She gives Colt one last look.

WANDA

Why are you here, Colt?

Silence. Wanda exits. Colt goes behind her.

INT.WANDA'S PALACE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Colt walks a step behind Wanda. They stop. American soldiers  
appear before them. Satisfied. Drunk. Accompanied by the  
women of Wanda's court. Wanda exchanges knowing glances with  
her women.

WANDA

I hope you're having a great  
evening. We want everyone to feel  
at home here.

HARPER

And it works. Thank you.

WANDA

Have fun. In the morning it will be  
a new day. And then we will talk  
about the real purpose of your  
visit.

Wanda passes them. She disappears into the darkness. Colt  
stands as if paralyzed. He stares at Harper.

HARPER

You heard the queen. Go and have  
fun.

INT. WANDA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Wanda invites Colt in. She tenderly takes his hand. She  
confidently enters the room and closes the door behind them.  
No one will disturb them anymore. They are alone now. And  
she can't wait. She presses Colt against the wall. Wildly.  
Passionately. Confidently. She deals the cards. She wins.

(CONTINUED)

She undresses... And he... surrenders to all this desire and feeling. He dances in her wild dance. He lets her pull off his uniform. He helps her take off her dress... and they make love. Wildly. Passionately. This once.

COLT

You are incredibly beautiful.

WANDA

Oh, those American learned quotes.

COLT

You're incredibly beautiful.  
Dangerous. Stubborn. Hot... I've  
never met a woman like you, and yet  
I feel like I've always missed you.

WANDA

Oh, even more American quotes.

Colt bursts into laughter. Wanda does too. They laugh together. Loudly. Genuinely.

Colt traces her scar with his fingers. After a moment, his fingers give way to his lips.

WANDA

Stop.

COLT

Will you tell me why you wear them?

WANDA

My father sold me to a knight. This knight considered me valuable. I didn't make a very good wife, so he decided to sell me at market. He got more use out of me than he did from me at home.

COLT

Are you married?

WANDA

Americans...no. I was. I was a wife. I was a slave. It's a past. Now I am a free woman. And a queen. BUT this scar...this is a part of me.

COLT

Why does no one in the world know about this hell

(CONTINUED)

WANDA

Because no one is listening.

Wanda stares at the candlelight on his tired face. It lets him fall asleep.

INT. SAUNA - NIGHT

Wanda emerges from the darkness. She sees her women stepping out into the hallway. Each holding a torch. They are wild. And free. And self-satisfied. They close the door behind them. They bolt it.

Wanda steps closer. She takes one of the torches. She stares into the fire for a moment.

WANDA

It's time to provide our guests  
with a hot and intoxicating night.

Wanda straightens up. She enters the sauna. The women follow her. Each of them has the slave brand burned into their backs.

Americans sit in a sauna. Drunk on heat and alcohol. The women start dancing. With fire. They know exactly what to do. They're professionals. Wild. Liberated. Seductive. Men completely let their guard down around them.

One torch falls to the floor. The women gracefully retreat from the sauna. Wanda throws the torches at the Americans' feet. It's too late to react. The women leave. They close the door behind them. The sauna bursts into flames.

INT.WANDA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Silence. Only the birdsong.

Colt sleeps, naked, under a heavy blanket. On the table beside him - a dragon necklace and his airplane cufflinks, folded neatly next to a glass.

The door opens.

Wanda enters. In a black dress. Ready for war, for coronation, for death. Queen again.

She stands by the bed. She looks at him for a long time.

She leans down. She kisses his forehead.

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WANDA

My men are now loading urns draped  
in whistling banners onto a plane.  
Take them home to your country. Let  
the stars on this flag remind you  
of the sky over Crimea. Remember,  
they didn't die in battle...they  
died because they wanted to take  
away freedom from people who value  
it above all else.

Colt mutters something in his sleep. He grabs Wanda's hand.  
He doesn't want to let go. It looks vulnerable. And  
adorable. And it fits in her bed.

WANDA

You fly high, Texas boy. But don't  
come back here again. Because then  
I'll burn down your whole world.  
And you.

Wanda leaves the bedroom. She discreetly wipes away her  
tears. She straightens her back. She listens to the sound of  
drums and horns. She walks away into the darkness.