



Act IV Scene 1



Lara felt raindrops falling down on her face. She opened her eyes, but strangely there was nothing. It was not dark, it was just vacant — an infinite emptiness — like what Lara imagined as the deepest outer-space, beyond all stars and moons and planets, transcending time and equivocating on existence.

Suddenly, there was a tremendous explosion above and straight after, a more muted one below.

Lara jumped and started sliding down a slippery jagged slope. Her arms flailed about frantically, first clawing futilely at the strange surface, then waving wildly in the vacancy around her. Soon, she clasped some firm object and clung on, desperately.

A dagger of light tore space in two. She could see.

She was on a roof clinging to a chimney. Attila was up above her, lying peacefully on the tiles. His face was glowing in the blaze of lightning. But now it was dark again, and the rain pattered on the slate roof.

She called up to him, “Attila! Wake up!”

His arm twitched in the darkness.

She added, “Be careful! We’re on a roof.”

“La... Lara,” he stammered feebly, “I can’t see.”

“I know, I know, neither can I. We’re on a roof and there’s a storm. I slipped before, but I’ll come to you.”

Attila lay still on his back, not even daring to lift his head, thanks not just to Lara’s advice but also to some innate sense that his position was precarious.

Lara made her way towards him, finding footholds in the overlay between tiles. Once she got to him, she found another chimney just in front of her (behind Attila) and they both held on to it and waited for another strike of lightning to further illuminate their position.

But before any thunder or lightning, a glow rose from the darkness down below them adding a yellow haze to the roof’s perimeter. It seemed the house’s lights had been turned on abruptly.

They had to get down off the roof.

Thunder rang out once again as they made their way to the edge. Lightning struck, and they saw clearly a pipe running up the side of the house beside a balcony situated on the second floor.

“I think I can make it,” said Lara.



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“If you’re sure,” replied Attila. The repeated adventures had made him quite laconic.

Soon, Lara was on the balcony.

She shouted up at Attila.

“You should be able to do it. Throw me your cane. You just have to grab it and control the slide.”

“I’m coming.”

She could only see an approximate outline of Attila in the house’s unenthusiastic shine. The silhouette clambered to the very edge of the roof’s concrete gutter and lowered itself over the precipice. But Attila’s arms were old and frail and could not hold him and he fell, plunging into the vast darkness below.

Lara looked up and saw his dive.

“ATTILA NO!” she cried. But he was gone.



Set





