

The Fortune Witch

At the appointed time, the doorbell rang downstairs.

Letting the visitor in through the intercom, the fortune witch sat at her ritual table — waiting, with a vague feeling of anxiety. The music she had chosen as background on YouTube — a mantra for opening the money channel — sounded like a funeral dirge.

And now it was playing not for the ritual, but for her —

as if she herself were the main character in need of burial services.

The windows were covered with heavy drapes, and the black candle burning on the table, along with an old lamp with a lampshade, created a sense of cozy twilight.

The visitor entered without knocking and immediately began waving his hand, as if swatting away cigarette smoke, saying: “Whoa, so many demons in here!” —

and walked to the table, where the fortune witch sat, sweating. He pulled out a chair and sat down opposite her.

She suddenly felt uncomfortable. He silently and intently stared at the fortune witch. He was dressed all in black, simple and unremarkable at first glance.

She didn’t even think to call him a client. He could’ve been forty or fifty. He was bald and had a broken nose with a scar.

“Boxer,” the fortune witch thought. “But not a racketeer — I’ve got it covered”.

Her intuition sounded the alarm too late.

Fat and lazy-looking, with “downstairs” connections,

for the first time she felt like a helpless woman who had spent her whole life profiting off the fear, loneliness, and despair of others — those who came to her for help were sold to the devils for ritual services.

The visitor remained silent, staring intently at her sweaty face, shifting his gaze to her trembling cheeks and twitching sausage fingers. Horror spread through the room like a greasy, stinking soup, and without realising it, she began to whisper, “Our Father...”

She did not see that behind her, the faces of the saints had slipped off the icons placed in the corners, and the candles bought at the crap-market had melted.

“I won’t be long,” he said. “And you don’t need to get the cards out. You already understand that I’m not here for that.” From the long pause, her head began to spin, and a black sticky slime appeared in the fat folds of her skin.

“Today just isn’t your day. And the lot has fallen on your... let’s say, your ritual services agency. From time to time I visit your colleagues in this profession.

And apart from disgust, your carcasses evoke nothing. Like your dietitian diploma from twenty-years ago — in a frame, behind glass, hanging on the wall.”

“Under the guise of magic, you sign your name beneath shizoteric vomit, spreading the necrophilic rot of black sorcery — calling this filth “magic”.

Did, actually,” he corrected himself, “before I arrived.”

The fortune witch wheezed as she breathed. She hadn’t spoken — or couldn’t — a single word since the moment he walked in.

“So, then,” he smirked,

“Before I go, shall we do a little ritual for good luck?

Or maybe a whisper-spell for the road?”, he asked, staring straight into her eyes.

He stood up silently and left without looking back.

She listened as his footsteps faded in the hallway, and then the front door slammed shut.

The visitor left, taking the rest of her life force with him. And the fortune witch felt the demons devouring her — like fleas feasting on a stray dog dying in a garbage dump.

She squealed like a pig in a pen, sensing death from the pig-sticker and the blowtorch, and began to rush around the room, overturning the props and losing the last shreds of self-preservation.

She tore off all her clothes — they burned and choked her — grabbed the ritual knife with which she had butchered poor black hens, and, staggering, holding onto the wall, she made her way to the bathroom.

Climbing into the tub — like onto an altar — barely fitting her carcass inside, she began clumsily slashing her veins — through layers of fat, across her body and neck. She kept slashing until the knife slipped from her bloody hands, and with a choking gasp, she released her spirit — which was devoured at once.

The End

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