

THE GOLEM

Written by

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Inspired by

"The Legend of the Golem of Prague"

FADE IN:

1 EXT. COBBLED STREET - NIGHT 1

A long shadow enters frame, tailed by AMI, male, 17, walking down the cobblestone pathways. The sounds of his footsteps echo through the narrow streets.

He exits frame. A beat of silence.

Behind him, more pairs of footsteps are heard.

A group of long shadows appear, following behind Ami.

They exit frame.

The sounds of physical struggle are heard; shoves, kicks, punches-

CUT TO:

2 INT. SYNAGOGUE - DAY 2

Ami stands in the pews holding a prayer book, his left eye is bruised black. Over his shoulders he wears tallit, a prayer shawl.

A prayer, Adon Olam, is sung in tune by the congregation. Ami is a moment too late though; he is out-of-sync.

The Rabbi speaks from the bimah. He looks up, scanning the audience and notices Ami.

INT. RABBI'S OFFICE - DAY

Ami cleans up the Rabbi's office after kiddush.

He corks the wine bottle, and picks up the kiddush cup. He notices that there is a little wine left in it. He drinks it.

The Rabbi enters. Pulling back the curtain, the sounds of murmuring congregants are heard behind him. He wears a dark cloak and tallis, holding a wooden cane in his offhand.

Ami turns around, revealing his black eye.

The Rabbi closes the curtain, the murmurs quiet. He approaches Ami, gently placing a hand on Ami's cheek, acknowledging the black eye with his thumb.

RABBI
Neshomele...

Ami recoils.

The Rabbi looks at Ami sadly. Ami grabs a stack of prayer books from the Rabbi's desk and walks away. The Rabbi leans his cane against the table and takes a seat. He tries to think of something to say.

RABBI (CONT'D)
You should take the long way home,
you will avoid them there.

AMI
And just run away and let them win?

Ami walks to the bookshelf, and begins to put away prayer books. The Rabbi thinks for a moment.

RABBI
It's not about winning, it's
survival. When the mouse runs from
the snake, you wouldn't call the
mouse a coward. (beat) Not to call
you a mouse.

The Rabbi chuckles to himself. Ami says nothing. The Rabbi looks over his shoulder, Ami continues to put books away.

The Rabbi turns back. He looks at the kiddush cup, realizing it's now empty.

RABBI (CONT'D)
Neshomele... what you are going
through- what our community is
going through... our pain is yours.
Let us help you. (beat) Ami?

While the Rabbi speaks, Ami notices something behind the other books; a red leatherbound book is hidden; on its cover is a gold-embossed symbol, the OUROBOROS; a snake eating its own tail.

Ami stares at it with great intensity.

AMI
I don't need your help. I can take
care of myself.

RABBI
You must trust in God.

Ami storms out of the room. As he walks past the bookshelf, the space where the red leather-bound alchemist textbook sat is now empty.

CUT TO:

4

INT. AMI'S STUDY - DAY

4

The alchemist textbook slams down onto the table. Ami opens it and begins to read.

The parchment is filled with illuminated manuscript, detailed illustrations of alchemical symbols and Kabbalist text.

Illustrations of figures building a figure out of clay- the GOLEM. One shows the Golem as a protector- another shows a town engulfed in flames, as the Golem looms over it.

Ami is puzzled as he sees more surreal illustrations which progress into more disturbing imagery.

He slams the book shut, revealing the tallit laying on the table. He stares at it.

5

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

5

Ami walks; his footsteps echo through the quiet streets. The book is tucked under his overcoat.

The sounds of distant murmurs are heard, and a group of shadows enter the frame.

Ami ducks behind a corner. The shadows pass by, heading towards the synagogue. Ami quietly steps out, and slowly walks towards the voices.

He abruptly hears the sound of glass shattering. He stops.

In shadow, someone throws another brick. Glass shatters- Ami recoils.

Laughs and murmurs are heard, and they increase in volume; they walk back towards him.

Ami grips the book over his coat. He takes a step back, and begins to run home.

The sound of his footsteps echo through the empty streets.

6 INT. AMI'S STUDY - NIGHT

6

Ami enters the study and shuts the door, locking it.

He breathes heavily. He walks down the stairs into his study, and catches his breath. He then looks down at the alchemist textbook in his hands.

He sinks to his knees and cracks open the book. He tears out a page and palm slaps it to the floor. On the page is an illustration of the Golem as a protector.

A MONTAGE OF RITUAL PRACTICES. Ami lights candles.

As Ami carries out the ritual, the voiceover of the Rabbi is heard.

RABBI (V.O.)
We cannot live in fear. We must
live in spite of it.

We intercut between Ami's Study and the synagogue.

7 INT. SYNAGOGUE - DAY

7

The Rabbi speaks from the bimah.

RABBI
As you know, last night our place
of worship was attacked. It is easy
to turn to anger and seek
retribution. But we must remember
the Ethics of our Fathers.

6 INT. AMI'S STUDY

6

In closeups, Ami grabs chunks of clay and begins to build. It starts to take form; arms, hands, a head, eyes.

RABBI (V.O.)
"Who is mighty? He who subdues his
evil inclination. He that is slow
to anger is better than the
almighty."

Ami steps back to admire the hulking Golem figure in front of him.

CUT TO:

7 INT. SYNAGOGUE - DAY 7

The Rabbi scans the congregation. His eyes land on the empty spot where Ami once stood.

8 INT. AMI'S STUDY - DAY 8

A KNOCK at the door.

Ami either ignores it, or didn't hear it in the first place; he is fully entranced in the ritual.

He flips the page and begins to mumble.

AMI

(in Hebrew) Beshem Kol ma
shekadosh, ani ma'anik lachemar
hazhe bushmeat chaim. Ani koreh
beshem elohim, hashem hameporash.

Another KNOCK on door. Ami is still oblivious.

The Rabbi opens the door. He walks down the staircase shakily, placing his cane on the stair in front of him before stepping.

The Rabbi enters the space and looks around in fear. He sees Ami.

RABBI

Ami... what is this?

Ami continues, unfazed, mumbling in prayer. The Rabbi notices the alchemist textbook on the desk, and looks back up at Ami.

RABBI (CONT'D)

You steal and then ignore me?

Ami doesn't respond. Worried, he approaches Ami from behind, placing a hand gently on his shoulder.

RABBI (CONT'D)

Neshomele... your pain is real, I
know it. But this is just a fable,
it is only clay.

Ami knocks his elbow into one of the candlesticks. The candle falls to the ground, its flame still burning.

Ami's glance stays fixed ahead, unaware of his surroundings. His eyes are filled with fire.

The Rabbi sees Ami is in a trance.

INSERT: The flame from the candle spreads to the ripped page.

The Rabbi steps between Ami and the book, grabbing him by the shoulders, attempting to shake him out of it.

RABBI (CONT'D)

Ami!

Filled with fury, Ami shoves the Rabbi out of his way.

The Rabbi stumbles backwards, slips, falls-

CRACK- his head hits the table.

The room goes silent. A beat.

Ami looks down, towards his mentor, who lies motionless on the floor. His eyes are welling with tears. He stares in horror for a beat.

He breaks from his trance and rushes to the Rabbi's side, cradling him in his arms.

Ami searches for some sign of life- all he finds is the blood now on his hands.

In grief, Ami's head sinks into the Rabbi's cloak. Ami holds the Rabbi close.

The Rabbi mutters out the beginning of the prayer, Adon Olam. But his voice trails off, and his body goes limp. Ami holds him in horror.

Ami begins to hum the prayer where his mentor left off. The sound of crackling fire grows.

Ami cradles his mentor and hums the melody of the prayer, as the room is filled with orange glow.

The silhouette of the Golem looms over them as the room is engulfed in flames.

FADE TO BLACK: