

Remember, Remember the 5th of December

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2020

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INT. RUSTIC LOG CABIN, LIVING AREA - NIGHT

OSKA, 7, beams from ear to ear as he unpacks painted wooden ornaments from an old box and places them neatly in rows ordered by colour and size.

He's dressed in Lederhosen and clogs, a knitted hat on his head wards off the cold.

To Oska's side is a newly cut Fir tree, vestiges of snow still evident, waiting to be adorned.

In the large fireplace, a pot of stew bubbles, flames leap, and logs crackle as if also in festive mood. On either side of the fire and dotted around the room are oil lamps and candles to illuminate the winter gloom.

MAMA, 40s, somber face and a rough winter clothes that match her expression, enters the room.

She reverentially carries a small, ornately carved, box.

His smile vanishes.

OSKA
Mama, do we have to?

MAMA
It's a tradition.

She stops in front of the fire.

MAMA
Are you ready?

Oska nods.

She opens the box and takes out a wooden figurine of St Nicholas, six inches of ornate robes, hooked staff, white hair and a beatific smile.

MAMA
First to enter is St Nicholas
He seeks children who are good.

She pauses and retrieves a second figurine, Krampus, birch sticks in one hand, and slightly taller than St Nicholas due to the massive ram's horns.

MAMA
Second to arrive is Krampus
Here for children who are bad.

Mama places the figures at either end of the mantelpiece.

MAMA
Your turn.

OSKA
Don't want to.

MAMA
If you don't want him to come...

She points at Krampus.

Oska gulps.

OSKA
Be good today and all year round,
A St Nicholas reward will be found.

He bows to St Nicholas.

OSKA
Be naughty now, or any other day,
Krampus will whisk you straight away.

He bows to Krampus.

MAMA
That's right.

Oska still looks worried.

She tousles his hair and pulls him in for a hug.

MAMA
What day is it?

OSKA
Krampusnacht.

MAMA
And tomorrow is?

OSKA
St Nicholas Day?

MAMA
So just one more day of being good
and tomorrow...

OSKA
Presents?

She smiles and nods.

MAMA
Maybe a new sled.

Oska grins.

MAMA
Now shall we decorate that tree?

INT. RUSTIC LOG CABIN, OSKA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Moonlight seeps in through the small window, a child's bed, chest of drawers, and a wardrobe are all its glow reveals.

Oska groans in his sleep, kicks the thick blanket away, turns over drenched in sweat.

A floorboard CREAKS.

Oska's eyes flick open.

He peers into the dark corners of his room, searching for the origin of the noise.

KRAMPUS, devilish horns glinting, steps from the shadows. In one hand birch sticks, the other reaches for Oska as an evil sneer spreads on his face.

Oska tries to scream, but no sound escapes.

Krampus advances, each step accompanied by another CREAK.

Oska shuffles backward, trying to shrink into the wall behind his bed.

The beast reaches out, long taloned fingers stretching ever closer to Oska's face.

OSKA
(whispers)
No.

BANG.

Oska wakes with a start. His window BANGS again, hurled open by the snow storm outside. Then it CREAKS as it swings, BANGS, in the frame, then CREAKS again.

Awake now, he grabs the candle at his bedside and peers around the room pushing the candle out towards the corners to get a better look.

No Krampus.

Oska rises, closes the window and shakes his head.

INT. RUSTIC LOG CABIN, STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Oska, barefoot, tiptoes down the stairs, his candle casting a soft glow.

He pauses half-way and cocks his head to listen.

Faint SNORING comes from above.

INT. RUSTIC LOG CABIN, LIVING AREA - CONTINUOUS

Oska sneaks into the room and heads for the fireplace.

He lifts his candle and examines the mantle.

St Nicholas and Krampus still there.

OSKA
Just a dream, just a dream.

Tentatively, he lifts Krampus.

OSKA
I've been good, honest.

He replaces Krampus and picks up St Nicholas.

OSKA
Can I have a red sled --

A blob of hot wax drips from the candle onto the exposed skin of Oska's foot.

He SCREAMS in pain and drops St Nicholas into the glowing cinders of the fire.

The wood statue starts to smoulder.

OSKA
No!

He grabs the fire's poker and tries to drag St Nicholas from the coals. But his action just exposes the embers to more oxygen.

St Nicholas bursts into blue-green flames.

From the darkness comes a loud BREATHING sound and a FOOTSTEP, though maybe it's not a foot, a hoof perhaps.

OSKA
Please, please, please.

He tries again with the poker, pulling the burning St Nicholas nearer to the edge of the fire.

Another step and the breathing is LOUDER.

Oska drops to his knee and grabs for the burning figure.

It's too hot to hold, all he achieves is to drop it back into the now ablaze coals.

OSKA
No!

He leans forward and tries the poker again.

But a clawed hand grabs him by the elbow.

Oska loses it completely, SCREAMS at the top of his lungs.

OSKA
MAMA!

Krampus drags him away from the fire and whips him across the legs with the birch sticks in his other claw.

KRAMPUS
Baaad child.

OSKA
No, no, I promise to be good.

KRAMPUS
Baaad.

OSKA
It was an accident. I didn't mean it.

Krampus thrashes him again with the birch.

KRAMPUS
Punish.

OSKA
No, please, please.

Krampus wraps a large arm around Oska.

KRAMPUS

Awaaay.

OSKA

No --

The cabin window flies open as a massive gust of wind sweeps in and swirls snow, smoke, and hot embers through the room.

Oska looks at Krampus with pleading eyes, the type that only innocent children truly possess.

KRAMPUS

(bellows)

Baaaad!

And in an instant, both Krampus and Oska fly back through the open window and are gone.

The window itself slams shut with a THUNDERCLAP.

Snowflakes settle and melt, smoke rises to the ceiling and peace descends.

BEAT.

Mama shuffles, bleary-eyed, into the room.

MAMA

Oska, you down here?

No answer.

She turns and examines the scene.

All calm.

She picks up Krampus and reaches for St Nicholas.

No St Nicholas.

She glances at the floor, sees the dropped candle and the remnants of hoof-prints in the melted snowflakes.

She raises the Krampus figure to her gaze, an awful realisation dawning.

MAMA

No!

She throws the Krampus figure into the fire, but it's too late for that, far too late.