

Less Soap, More Blood

by

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FADE IN.

INT. AGENCY - DAY

ROMA barges into her agent GREGORY'S office.

GREGORY

Roma! How are you, dear?

ROMA

Oh, come off it. Don't give me that happy Roma dear bullshit.

GREGORY

What's wrong?

ROMA

You know what's wrong, Greg. I want to work! I need to work or I'm going to explode out of my mind. I'm sick of these two word, three word lines at these horrible auditions. I can't even get a full sentence nowadays! Am I not good enough for a full sentence at an audition?!

GREGORY

Obviously, you're upset.

ROMA

Upset!! I'm angry! I'm angry, Greg. We've been working together for two years! Two years and all you send me out on are soap commercials.

GREGORY

Even Ingmar Bergman, one of the most revered filmmakers of all time made soap commercials during his career.

ROMA

You think comparing me to some great foreign director is going to somehow make me feel ecstatic

ROMA (cont'd)
about doing a soap commercial?!

GREGORY
Well, to be honest...if you can just calm down and give me a second. I have some interesting news to tell you.

ROMA (calming)
Interesting news?

GREGORY
To be honest, I was just about to call you and tell you. It may not be the greatest news you wish to hear right this instant, but your ears must have been ringing---

ROMA
Just spit it out before I die from suspense.

GREGORY
Well...I received a call today... and, as it turns out...there's a director who wants to cast you in something but, before you get crazy, let me just say it's a wonderful opportunity, he's a good director, his short film just got into Sundance.

ROMA
Greg...tell me what it's for, right now.

GREGORY
...It's for a soap commercial.

ROMA (simmering)
A what?

GREGORY (CLEARS HIS THROAT)
A soap commercial.

ROMA

I see.

GREGORY

Roma, dear, let me put this into perspective for---

ROMA

Gregory, can I ask you a question?

GREGORY

Sure.

ROMA

Okay. Is my work as an actress going to consist of being literally a soap star?

Beat.

I have five different soap brands sending me free boxes of their products to my home each month. I have enough soap to cleanse all of Hollywood for an entire year.

GREGORY

I know, I know, but if you take this gig, it will be good for you.

ROMA

For you! It will be good for you! I'm making you money and you're killing my career before it even gets started. What the hell did I do ten years of theatre for?! I played Lady Macbeth! I killed myself over that role! Those lines still penetrate my brain... 'blood on my hands!' I can't take this degrading industry anymore. You better do something for me and you better do it fast. I need something I can sink my fangs into. Give me some meat! I am hungry and I need to eat a giant

ROMA (cont'd)
piece of fat meat right here and
(she imitates eating meat in the
air) like that and I am a vicious
hungry bitch and want to work on a
role that will actually show what
the hell I'm capable of giving to
this sucked out humanity. Less
soap, more blood!

Gregory fixes Roma a drink from his bar.
He brings it over to her gently.

GREGORY
Drink this Roma, calm your nerves.

Roma drinks.

I don't have to tell you that
you've picked a tough industry.

ROMA
IT PICKED ME.

GREGORY
Exactly. It picked you. Of
course it did.

ROMA
I just want to work on character.

GREGORY
Yes.

ROMA
All these other actors are working
and winning awards. I want to be
an award winning actor, too.

GREGORY
Don't be so hard on yourself.

ROMA
Can't you find me work in an
arthouse film?

GREGORY

That's not really my wheelhouse.

Roma gives Gregory a nasty look.

But, I will try. Sure I can
find you something.

ROMA

I'm getting old!

GREGORY

No, you're not.

ROMA

Old! Old! Old!

Roma drinks. Taps her glass with her finger.
Gregory pours her more liquor.

GREGORY

You don't look a day over
twenty-five.

ROMA

I don't?

GREGORY

Not one day over.

ROMA

I was in the bagel shop the
other day and the woman behind
the counter said the same thing
to me.

GREGORY

You see?

ROMA

But, it won't last forever.
All this YOUTH.

GREGORY

Roma? I have to ask you this because they need to know today. Will you do this commercial?

ROMA

Where are they shooting?

GREGORY

Tokyo, Japan.

ROMA

Really?

GREGORY

It's going to be shot like a movie. Won't feel like a soap commercial. I have the script.

Gregory fumbles around on his desk, pulling out a few page script. He hands it to Roma.

Roma quietly reads.

ROMA (reading out-loud)

She pulls out gun and screams, "You will never take my fragrance!" BOOM, BOOM, BOOM she fires three rounds into the Bacteria Critters. (she looks at Gregory) What are Bacteria Critters?

GREGORY

Soap killing creatures. (clears his throat) You are the heroine defending the soaps right to keep us clean. Like, Batman, except for soap. (beat) They plan on doing a series, an ongoing commercial series of this and you've been chosen for the lead.

ROMA

Sounds different.

GREGORY
Less soap, more blood...right?

ROMA
Will I have a cape?

GREGORY
Ah, YES! I remember them talking
about a cape.

ROMA
...Okay.

GREGORY
Will you do it?

ROMA
..Yes, since I know I'm needed,
Gregory.

GREGORY
I'll call them this instant.

ROMA
But, Greg.

GREGORY
Yes, Roma.

Roma stares at Gregory.

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE OUT.