

Blood Debt

Written by

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EXT. LUMBER YARD - NIGHT

A few large floodlights illuminate the sleeping machinery and tall rows of stacked lumber. A mist rolls over the surrounding forest.

Down one of the rows, in a far corner of the site, DETECTIVE GRAYSON (40s, dishevelled, bestubbled) is kneeling, his hands bound behind his back, his face bruised and bleeding.

He is flanked by rough looking thugs (THUG NUMBER ONE and THUG NUMBER TWO).

Out of the darkness TARANTELLA emerges (60s, a distinguished air about him, a suit tailored to within an inch of its life). He walks casually towards Grayson.

TARANTELLA

Detective Grayson. I'm so glad you've finally graced us.

GRAYSON

Tarantella! I knew I'd catch up with you eventually.

TARANTELLA

Are you going to arrest me? I assume that's why you're here.

GRAYSON

Charles Tarantella, you're under arrest for murder, conspiracy-

WHAM! Thug Number One punches Grayson hard across the jaw.

TARANTELLA

You know, I have great admiration for you, Bill. Oh, you don't mind if I call you Bill? I've enjoyed our little game of cat and mouse. Seems a shame to have to kill you.

Tarantella takes a gun from inside his jacket.

TARANTELLA (cont'd)

But kill you I must.

He places the gun against Grayson's forehead.

TARANTELLA (cont'd)

Goodnight detective. I'll make sure your grieving widow is well taken care of.

A noise!

There's something moving around in the darkness. Tarantella and Thugs numbers One and Two look around, alarmed.

Movement! Something in the darkness. In the next row.

TARANTELLA (cont'd)
 (to Thug Number Two)
 You! Thug Number Two! Go see what
 that is!

THUG NUMBER TWO
 I thought I was Thug Number One.

TARANTELLA
 Go!

Thug Number Two takes out his gun and, holding it ahead of him, ventures into the next row.

SCREAMS! GUNSHOTS! BANGING! Followed by the definite heavy THUD of a body falling to the ground.

Tarantella is scared. He places the gun to Grayson's head again.

TARANTELLA (cont'd)
 Who have you brought with you?

Grayson shrugs, clearly as confused as they are.

There is a SCRATCHING, SCAMPERING noise. Tarantella looks around for the source.

Grayson looks up to the top of the tall wall of lumber and there, silhouetted majestically against the moon,

is a **squirrel!**

Tarantella also looks up but as he does the squirrel leaps down onto Tarantella's face biting and clawing at him.

TARANTELLA (cont'd)
 Aargh!

He starts firing his gun around, Not sure of what's going on. One of the shots blows Thug Number Two's head clean off.

The squirrel jumps off Tarantella's face and disappears into the darkness.

Tarantella frantically looks around, his face scratched and bleeding.

Unseen, the squirrel scampers up behind Grayson and chews through the ropes binding his hands. Grayson pulls his hands free and stands up, Tarantella's back is turned.

GRAYSON

Yes...

Tarantella turns to face Grayson.

GRAYSON (cont'd)

I do mind if you call me Bill.

WHAM! Grayson punches Tarantella in the face and he falls to the ground. Out cold.

GRAYSON (cont'd)

As I was saying, you're under arrest.

The squirrel scampers up the wall of lumber and runs along the top.

GRAYSON (cont'd)

Wait!

The squirrel stops and turns around, again silhouetted against the moon.

GRAYSON (cont'd)

... Why?

The squirrel stands for a beat and then offers a little salute wave.

GRAYSON (cont'd)

It can't be!

And with that we **flash back** to--

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

A younger Grayson, (20s) now a uniformed beat cop, is running along the path of a wooded city park, chasing a CRIMINAL (16ish, carrying a charity tin, coins falling and rolling after him).

GRAYSON

Stop!

The criminal, in his haste, accidentally tramples a little squirrel.

Grayson slows to a halt next to the animal and looks down at it. It's almost dead, taking gasping little breaths. He looks at the criminal and back down at the squirrel.

Grayson scoops up the squirrel, letting the criminal get away.

CUT TO:

INT. VETERINARY SURGERY

The VETERINARY SURGEON (20s, tired, serious) looks up from the table where she has been working on the squirrel. Grayson is in the corner, wringing his hat in his hands.

VETERINARY SURGEON
It's been tough but he's a fighter.
he's going to make it.

Grayson is relieved.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

Grayson is kneeling down in a nicely wooded area of the park. Autumn leaves are falling and the morning sun paints the trees gold.

Grayson places a cardboard box on the ground and opens the side.

The squirrel darts out and scampers up the nearest tree. It stops on a branch and turns to look at officer Grayson as he stands up.

The squirrel offers him a little salute wave.

Officer Grayson smiles...

EXT. LUMBER YARD - NIGHT

Fade to the older Detective Grayson. Red and blue flashing lights illuminate him smiling up at the moon, the squirrel still silhouetted against it.

Grayson offers the squirrel a little salute wave.

We see the moon. The squirrel is gone. His blood debt is paid.

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