

PENELOPE
And The Lost Relic

By

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Penelope&theRelic©2023

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INT. SANCTUARY - NIGHT

From the depths of the shadows, the alluring silhouette of the "Sapphire Goblet" glimmers under the soft moonlight. A haunting figure emerges from behind, a Priestess whose face is obscured by an intricate and fearsome tattoo.

The chamber in which she stands is a sacred place of water worship, filled with shimmering statues and cascading waterfalls. At the heart of it lies a magnificent fountain, its basin held aloft by seven statues of women.

Droplets of water descend into a pristine marble basin, causing the still surface to come alive with gentle ripples. As we watch the sapphire goblet sink slowly beneath the surface, a sudden burst of movement shatters the tranquility of the scene. An arrow, aflame, hurtles through the water with unbridled force.

INT. CASTLE CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The deafening ECHOES OF WAR resound through the ancient passageway as three knights surge forward. The walls and ceiling shudder with the force of EXPLOSIVE BLASTS, raining down a cascade of dust and rubble.

INT. SANCTUARY - NIGHT

The black-haired Priestess holds the goblet in her hands. One of the enclosure walls is on fire.

KNIGHT

They have breach the main entrance, my lady! We can't hold them off. They will be here soon! We must leave!

The sound of an EXPLOSION breaks her trance.

INT. CORRIDOR NEAR THE ESCAPE DOCK - DAWN

The Priestess strides forward, her flowing blue dress trailing behind her. The knights follow closely, their wives and children in tow, their arms laden with bundles and suitcases.

A sudden eruption shatters the scene, as a wall explodes into a shower of heavy stone blocks. The very ground shakes beneath their feet as pieces of the ceiling come crashing down. They flee, their path lit by the flickering glow of the raging inferno.

EXT. ESCAPE DOCK - DAWN

THUNDER RUMBLES and LIGHTNING ILLUMINATES the sky. The waters below churn, dark and foreboding. The group bursts onto the pier. Behind them, a hill rises up, crowned by a medieval castle. Half of the castle is ablaze, and a fierce battle rages on the hilltop.

The knights and their families scramble aboard a rocking boat. The Priestess hands the sapphire goblet to the knight. The scene is one of chaos and danger.

PRIESTESS

Take her! You must put her in safety.
Defend her with your own lives!

As the boat pull away from the shore. The Priestess stands at the pier, she cannot help but turn her gaze back towards the burning castle on the hill. Her long, dark hair dances in the wind, whipping about her face like a tempestuous storm, while her eyes betray a deep and abiding fear.

OPENING TITLE MONTAGE

A collage of Ink drawings, old photographs, broken notes, ancient maps and objects, magazine and newspaper clippings from various eras. All referencing the Holy Grail, the Crusades, expeditions, the Last Supper, etc. Illuminated by the dim light of a candle. The last painting we see blends into a frame in Penelope's house.

EXT. RIO DE JANEIRO - DAWN

We soar over Rio de Janeiro in the year 1943. A stunning sunrise illuminates the city nestled amidst the lush rainforest. The bustling metropolis begins to stir and come to life, as the sun continues to rise, the natural beauty of the rain forest that surrounds the city is revealed in all its splendor.

INT. PENELOPE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAWN

PENELOPE TELLES, a 15-year-old girl, enters the room. The opulent furnishings of the space clash with the modest and unassuming apartment. Boxes of unpacked belongings litter the floor. MARIA DAS GRAÇAS, Penelope's middle-aged mother, sits in an armchair, she clutches a photograph of her son Henrique, dressed in military uniform.

Penelope pays no attention to her presence, instead fussing over her own appearance in the mirror. Frustrated glance

towards her weeping mother. Penelope grabs her backpack and EXITS the room.

EXT. LAPA STREETS - DAY - DAWN

Penelope descends the steps of the buildings entrance and walks down the street. The city is waking up around her. A newsboy is shouting the latest news about the war in Europe.

EXT. DOWNTOWN RIO DE JANEIRO STREETS - DAWN

She passes by the Museum of Fine Arts. Two canvas banners hanging on the museum facade read "World Exhibition of Discovery". Penelope notices them without paying much attention and continues walking.

INT. S.M.IMMACULATE SCHOOL - SCHOOL GATE - DAWN

The school bell rings. Penelope rushes to the gate of Santa Maria Immaculate School and enters.

INT. S.M.IMMACULATE SCHOOL - SCHOOLYARD - DAY

Penelope enters in a hurry. The MOTHER SUPERIOR, along with the teachers, is beginning the prayer. Penelope joins the row where her classmates are. No one greets her.

INT. S.M.IMMACULATE SCHOOL - GALLERY - DAY

Penelope trails behind a chattering group of girls as they ambled down the hallway ahead of her. She catches sight of another corridor and stops, fascinated by its labyrinthine depths. A sense of excitement and fear washes over her. She snaps out of her trance and continues forward.

INT. S.M.IMMACULATE SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

Penelope sits at her desk in class, bored out of her mind as SISTER CLARA, lectures about history. Her classmates listen halfheartedly. Penelope doodles in her notebook.

SISTER CLARA (OFF)

Since the arrival of the Spanish and Portuguese in South America, several colonies were founded. In the Hispanic countries, the Vice-royalties of Peru and Rio de la Plata had great prominence, as well as the Captaincy of Chile. One of the most important centers was found in the city of Lima, known as the City of Kings in the 16th

and 17th centuries...

Penelope scans the room with a tired gaze. MICAELA VAZQUEZ, a pretty young girl, makes a bored face to her friend MARTA. Micaela and Marta laugh, a little too loud.

SISTER CLARA

Is there a problem, young ladies? Do you want to share something with me?

MICAELA

Sister Clara! We were...

Sister Clara raises her finger in a silent warning.

SISTER CLARA

That was a rhetorical question. I see that you ladies are very excited about my class. Well then!... You won't have a problem answering me which were the most important indigenous civilizations that existed in America before the arrival of Christopher Columbus?

MICAELA

That's not fair!

SISTER CLARA

Worth a grade, Miss Vasquez.

MICAELA

The Tupi Indians?

The girls burst into laughter. The teacher orders silence.

INT. S.M.IMMACULATE SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

The bell rings. The students leave the classroom.

SARA

Hello! You are the new girl right?

Penelope grins and leaves.

SARA

Hey, want to join us? We're gonna gather in the courtyard for some juicy gossip.

VALENTINA, and VALERIA - Sara's twin friends - glare at

Penelope, feeling annoyed.

PENELOPE

Thanks, but no thanks. I have to... I
have to go.

Penelope turns around and leaves.

VALENTINA (OFF)

Let her be. She's too weird.

INT. S.M.IMMACULATE SCHOOL - PATIO - DAY

Penelope reads alone on a bench made of Portuguese tiles
under a leafy tree. Around her, students play in groups.

INT. S.M.IMMACULATE SCHOOL SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

The students listen to the lesson of PROFESSOR ALVES. The
young novitiate SISTER MARIA INES knocks on the classroom
door.

SISTER MARIA INES

Professor Alves, may I make an
announcement?

The Professor nods with a frown.

SISTER MARIA INES

Professor Silva won't be able to give
his class today. So I'll allow a
longer break until the substitute
teacher arrives.

The bell rings.

PROFESSOR ALVES

You're dismissed. You can go.

The students rush out of the classroom. Penelope stays
behind. She takes her book out of her pocket and continues
reading. Liesl, a young blonde girl with round glasses, is
also reading. Micaela and Marta ENTER the room and approach
Liesl.

MICAELA

(sarcastic)

What are you so concentrated on,
Liesl? Practicing your Portuguese?

Liesl tries to get up, but Marta blocks her way out.

MARTA

My father said that all the Nazis
should be expelled from Brazil.

LIESL

Marta, let me go...

Micaela shoves Liesl.

PENELOPE

Stop it! That's enough!

Liesl takes advantage of the distraction and runs out of the
room.

MICAELA

Watch your tone!

Penelope stands up, takes her book, and leaves.

INT. S.M.IMMACULATE SCHOOL - HALLWAYS - DAY

Penelope walks aimlessly through the school corridors. She
stops, confused, unable to recognize her surroundings. She
has gotten lost, with identical long corridors stretching out
in front of her.

INT. S.M.IMMACULATE SCHOOL - FOUNTAIN COURTYARD - DAY

She discovers a new inner courtyard with a fountain and
animal statues. Excitement wells up in her as she explores
the corridors. She walks upstairs.

INT. S.M.IMMACULATE SCHOOL - STAIRS & ART GALLERY - DAY

A new room greets her, adorned with embroidered rugs and
murals depicting scenes of travel and what appears to be the
founding of a church. A confusing crystal chandelier hangs
from the intricately carved ceiling. On the other side of the
room, a heavy wooden door catches her eye. She approaches and
opens it without difficulty.

INT. S.M.IMMACULATE SCHOOL - PRIVATE LIBRARY - DAY

An impressive library stretches out before her. Spiral golden
stairs lead up to a upper floor where thousands of books are
neatly organized. In the center of the room, flanked by some
reading tables, a massive golden metal structure that
represents a solar system stands on a black marble pedestal.

Her foot bumps into a black leather folder, abandoned under

the table. She places it on a reading table, not giving it too much attention. She continues to examine the shelves full of books. Her finger runs over the covers, but most of them are not very appealing to her. She returns to the table, opens the folder, and spreads the papers on the table. They are in some language she does not know. Her gaze hardens. The Nazi Symbol is on the first page of the documents. She grabs the folder with the documents and runs away.

INT. PENELOPE'S HOME - AFTERNOON

Penelope eats alone. Her eyes fixed on her backpack. On the background her parents argue again. She ignores them.

INT. PENELOPE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Penelope scrutinizes the documents, scattered across her bed. Her eyes are fixed on the pages, determined and focused.

INT. PENELOPE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Penelope is on a hurry. She grabs her backpack and is about to leave the house.

PENELOPE'S MOTHER
Are you okay, honey?

PENELOPE
I'm fine, mom

PENELOPE'S MOTHER
Yesterday, you came back from school
and locked yourself in your room. Are
you sure everything's okay?

PENELOPE
I have to go.

EXT. S.M.IMMACULATE SCHOOL - ENTRANCE - DAY

Penelope slung her backpack over her shoulder, the envelope with the mysterious papers tucked safely inside.

INT. S.M.IMMACULATE SCHOOL - CHURCH COURTYARD - DAY

She enters the main courtyard. Liesl is sitting on a bench with her back against the church wall, lost in a book.

PENELOPE
Hey!

The girl jumped, timidly raising her hand in response.

PENELOPE

Your name is Lisa, right?

LIESL

My name is Liesl.

PENELOPE

Oh! Ok! Hi, Liesl. I'm Penelope.

LIESL

I know who you are. You are the new girl. You stood up for me...

Penelope rolls her eyes embarrassed. An awkward silence falls between them.

PENELOPE

Are you German, Liesl?

Liesl hesitates suspicious.

LIESL

My dad is German, and my mom is Portuguese. I imagine we're not the most popular people these days. My dad's been targeted by nationalist groups because he's not a party sympathizer. He was almost killed a year ago, but that doesn't seem to matter to a lot of people.

PENELOPE

Sure, especially Me, since I come from a bankrupt family with a father whose only concern is getting drunk every day!

Penelope and Liesl exchange serious looks before bursting out laughing.

PENELOPE

Do you know how to keep a secret, Liesl?

The girl nods.

EXT. S.M.IMMACULATE SCHOOL - DAY

Students scatter out the school gates, where their parents

and nannies await them.

INT. S.M.IMMACULATE SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Penelope walks the hallway.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
Miss Telles? One moment, please.

PENELOPE
Yes, Mother Superior!

MOTHER SUPERIOR
I got a complain from one of your
classmates.

Penelope presses her notebooks to her chest and stands at
attention.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
Showing disrespect just days before
the start of classes is not a good
sign. A young lady who received so
much praise from her previous school
cannot behave like this. I expect more
from you, Miss Telles.

PENELOPE
I don't understand Mother.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
Micaela Vazquez and Marta Souza.

PENELOPE
I confronted them for bullying Liesl.
It was my place to speak up, not hers.
And...

The woman stares at her with cold eyes.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
I don't want to hear any other
complain Miss Telles. You may go!

EXT. S.M.IMMACULATE SCHOOL - DAY

Penelope strides out of the school gates, her face etched
with fury and determination. But just as she reaches the
corner, a disheveled and frightened Liesl blocks her path,
her eyes wide with fear and excitement.

EXT. DOWNTOWN RIO - CINELANDIA - DAY

Penelope and Liesl walk the square surrounded by movie theaters.

LIESL

Where did you get this?

PENELOPE

What's on the papers?

LIESL

The sheets with drawings and diagrams were indecipherable to me. It's a group of meaningless notes, dates, names of strangers, and a series of mythological gods. They seem to be part of a poem or...

PENELOPE

Or what?

LIESL

Some kind of code.

EXT. DOWNTOWN RIO - FINE ARTS MUSEUM - DAY

They sit on the steps of the stairway.

LIESL

Who gave you these papers?

PENELOPE

I found them.

LIESL

Did you know that the symbol of the Third Reich, is on the first page? Is that why you came to me?

Penelope nodded.

LIESL

It's a German document, there's no doubt about that, On the sheet with the emblem, I also found an inscription that determines that the document belongs to the German secret service, the Schutzstaffel, SS, and emphasizes that the content is a state secret. This seems serious, Penelope."