

Crossroad Tree

By

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EXT. FOREST ROAD - NIGHT

MARIA, a woman in her early twenties, rolls out of the car and onto the road. Her arms protect her chest as the road scrapes up the rest of her body.

The car breaks. DENNIS, a middle aged man, gets out of his car YELLS OBSCENITIES. He gets back into the car.

Reverse lights turn on as the car speeds back.

Maria limps herself to stand up when she sees the car coming towards her. Eyes wide, she bolts into the forest.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Maria runs through a forest with makeup running down her face. She has her chest covered by her arms, protecting her sexy dress from malfunctioning. Hair blows in front of her face, blocking her line of sight.

Her high heels catches onto a branch, launching the rest of her body to the ground.

A MAN'S VOICE ECHOS through the trees.

DENNIS (O.C.)

Maria, come back here! I'm not going to hurt you.

Maria's eyes widen and her lips compress.

DENNIS (O.C.)

My cabin is just a few more miles away. Let's go there like we planned.

Her high heels catches onto a branch, launching the rest of her body to the ground.

DENNIS (O.C.)

Come on you little whore, come back here! I didn't even have my time with you yet!

Maria slides herself behind a tree. She squints her eyes close as she hyperventilates.

DENNIS (O.C.)

Fuck you anyway. If I ever see you again, consider yourself dead.

TIRES SCREECHING AWAY. Maria catches her breath.

Moonlight shines through the leaves and illuminates a path. In the distance, a pack of dogs HOWLS.

Maria takes a deep breath. She tucks herself into the ground. Her eyes close to rest.

A load of energy runs through the roots and lead up to Maria where the energy releases.

Maria's jolts into the air and plops back on the ground, now on the moonlit path. The pack of dogs now BARK.

Maria GROANS.

MARIA

Fine, I'll go!

Maria takes off her shoes. She breaks off the long heels, which she holds in her hand almost like a knife.

Limping up, Maria heads down the moonlit path.

LATER

The BARKS from the pack of dogs occurs again. Maria looks around for direction where the sound is coming from.

A phantasmagorical THREE HEADED BLACK DOG sits in front of her.

Maria SCREAMS as she runs back in the direction she came.

The dog moves to block her from turning around. They GROWL at her.

Maria SIGHS as she turns back around to keep walking down the path.

The dogs are in front of her again. All three dogs give her classic puppy eyes.

Maria bends down with her hands out. The dogs run up and lick her hands. They jump on their hind legs with their front paws landing on Maria for support.

MARIA

You three aren't so scary.

One of the dogs nudges her before they run down the path.

MARIA
 (winces in pain)
 Hey! Wait!

Maria catches her breath. She runs down the path.

MOMENTS LATER

The three headed dog sits at the Crossroads Tree. Running, Maria stops when she gains sight of this massive tree.

The tree stands at about forty feet tall. Its branches look like leaf covered wish bones. The right side of the tree has a more lit path, while the left side is full of shadows.

Maria rests underneath the tree. The dog comes up beside her, lays and rolls over on their back, and puts all their tongues out.

MARIA
 Does someone want a belly rub?

Maria rubs their tummy when HECATE, a three figured woman, appears.

HECATE
 Who dares to pet my dog at my
 Crossroad Tree?

The dog heads prop up with excitement. They run up to Hecate. On the other hand, Maria runs to a nearby bush where she hides behind.

HECATE
 You are not very good at hiding, my
 dear Maria.

MARIA
 (pops her head out)
 How do you know my name?

HECATE
 The one that shall not be named knows
 everyone's name.

MARIA
 (almsot bargaining)
 Hey, so, I am super sorry for petting
 your dog, well dogs technically, and
 for sitting under your tree.

HECATE

Why are you apologizing? I should be the one apologizing to you for scaring you. I thought the scare was going to get you to laugh.

MARIA

Sorry, it's been a rough night.

HECATE

There you go apologizing for nothing again!

MARIA

(screaming)

What do you want me to say! (feels bad) I'm sorry!

Maria breaks down into tears. Hecate crouches down next to her.

HECATE

When facing this tree, it is common to cry.

Maria WAILS.

HECATE

You might not realize it now, but the tree wanted you here.

MARIA

(sniffling)

Yeah, right.

HECATE

It is true! My tree is a magnet for dwellers who have lost their way.

MARIA

I am not lost. I was running away.

HECATE

But now, you are lost.

Maria turns away from Hecate.

HECATE

(leaning in)

You must choose precisely where it is you are going.

MARIA
I'm not going anywhere.

HECATE
I am afraid that is not an option.

MARIA
I cannot go back.

HECATE
So, you must move forward.

MARIA
But, which way?

HECATE
The way with more light will lead you
around in a circle, causing you to go
nowhere.

MARIA
I do not want to go down that road.

HECATE
Me either.

MARIA
So, I have to go down the dark path?

HECATE
I am afraid so.

Maria compresses her lips together as she peers down the
darker road.

MARIA
What if I lose my way again?

Maria watches Hecate float up towards the moon. Hecate
extends her right arm up, releasing a bright light.

Her light shines onto Maria then illuminates the darker path
as if the sun was out.

Tear eyed, Maria holds her head up high as she follows the
light down the path.