

JEALOUS PEOPLE ARE UGLY PEOPLE

Written by

Theo James Krekis

Developed with the assistance of the BBC and The Fold

Francesca Devas
Independent Talent Group
40 Whitfield Street
London, W1T2RH

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1

INT. LOUNGE, FLAT, JEWELLERY QUARTER - NIGHT

1

DISCORDANT STRINGS RISE as we open on a PAIR OF PRETTY GREEN EYES, locked in a cold, jealous stare. We SLOWLY ZOOM OUT, revealing VASILLY (21), second generation Greek immigrant, slouched on a sofa in a dim-lit lounge.

A GIRL leans INTO FRAME and speaks softly in his ear.

GIRL

Jealous people are ugly people.

VASILLY blinks, pulling himself out of his dark thoughts, glances at FATIMA (21), fiery, unapologetic.

VASILLY

I'm not jealous.

FATIMA

I know you better than the back of my own head.

VASILLY

Hand.

FATIMA

That too.

VASILLY guiltily turns his gaze back outside as the MUSIC CONTINUES TO SWELL.

POV: we ZOOM IN on LUKE (21), deluxe version, standing on the tiny balcony, deep in phone conversation. LUKE glances back inside and smiles - blissfully unaware of the jealousy festering in his friend.

VASILLY smiles back - strained - his reflection overlapping LUKE's as the MUSIC BUILDS TO A VIOLENT CRESCENDO.

2

EXT. BLOCK OF FLATS, BIRMINGHAM - BEFORE DAWN

2

A block of flats backdropped by black sky.

3

INT. FLAT - BEFORE DAWN

3

VASILLY reluctantly gets dressed in old labouring clothes as the rest of the city stays sleeping. His oversized hoodie is paint-stained, his Caterpillar boots scuffed and damp.

A blue-eyed amulet hangs on the back of the front door, staring directly at us. VASILLY walks INTO FRAME and exits.

MATCH CUT TO:

THE SAME FRAME BUT MUCH LATER - daylight bleeds across the amulet. VASILLY walks in after a hard day's graft, depleted of energy, clothes sodden with dirt.

As VASILLY clears FRAME, the amulet STARS. We HOLD as that same sense of DREAD BUILDS before we...

TRANSITION TO:

4

INT. SHOWER, BATHROOM, FLAT - NIGHT

4

ECU: a plug hole swallows a stream of muddy water.

CLOSE ON: VASILLY as he peels off a bloody blister from his hand like a wet stamp. He winces from the pain.

MOMENTS LATER: VASILLY is still under the shower, his shoulders slumped forward, spirit crushed.

VASILLY (PRE-LAP)
I'm happy for him. He's really
landed on his feet...

YIAYIA (PRE-LAP)
(in Greek)
Careful what you say - don't bring
mati on your friend.

VASILLY (PRE-LAP)
I'm complementing him, not cursing
him.

YIAYIA (PRE-LAP)
Bad luck listens. **Ftu ftu ftu----**

5

INT. BEDROOM, FLAT - NIGHT

5

A frustrated VASILLY is mid-phone conversation on loudspeaker with his YIAYIA (70) while sitting at a cluttered desk surrounded by a half-finished portfolio of illustrations.

VASILLY
Look, I have to go. Love to Papou.

VASILLY hangs up, wipes the stress from his eyes.

FATIMA (O.S.)
I wish my grandma spat down the
phone at me like that.

VASILLY turns to FATIMA on the bed, his face says it all.

FATIMA (CONT'D)
What? It's cute her trying to
protect you from some hokey pokey
evil eye.

He turns back to his work. FATIMA senses his mood dip, takes a softer approach.

FATIMA (CONT'D)

Your Yiayia's not wrong though. Who cares if Luke got it, you're too talented not to---

VASILLY

Please stop---

FATIMA

... Fine. Whatever.

Frustrated, FATIMA exits. VASILLY's left staring at a blank sheet of A4. There isn't a fibre of creativity left in him.

6

INT. KITCHEN, FLAT - NIGHT

6

ECU: a large raw chicken is brutalized by a kitchen knife.

FATIMA and LUKE are prepping dinner. VASILLY enters, sitting down on a stool on the other side of the counter.

FATIMA

You came off those dating apps 'cause you said they were depressing.

LUKE

Yeah, but needs must. I can't keep being your third wheel forever.

FATIMA

We love you being our third wheel. Means I'm not stuck with him all the time.

FATIMA pulls a face at VASILLY. He pulls a playful face back. LUKE half-smiles at their interaction, melancholic.

VASILLY

So? How was it?

LUKE

It was... *good*--- Yeah.

VASILLY

Don't be like that.

LUKE

Like what?

VASILLY

Coy. I told you the right man got the job.

(MORE)

VASILLY (CONT'D)

It's water under the bridge. I
wanna hear all about your first
day.

LUKE smiles appreciatively and resumes hacking into the raw
chicken with a knife.

LUKE

In which case--- it was sicker than
I could've imagined. Everyone there
is so sound. They gave me my own
work space where I basically got to
draw all morning---

We slowly PUSH IN on VASILLY as he continues to listen to
LUKE's exciting news. He wasn't expecting this kind of
response. We arrive in CLOSE-UP as his BREATHING SHALLOWS,
HIS EYES TURN GREEN WITH ENVY.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Then the CD takes me for a brunch
at this members club where he tells
me we've got this design summit in
Berlin next month that the whole
agency goes---

AND IN THAT VERY MOMENT, LUKE SLICES OFF THREE FINGER TIPS.
He jolts back, clutching his hand, staring at VASILLY in
shock, waiting for the pain to kick in. Stunned silence,
until he pulls his hand away and BLOOD SQUIRTS INTO THE AIR.

VASILLY and FATIMA jolt back in horror. LUKE sags to the
floor like a puppet without strings and we...

CUT TO BLACK

7 A DARKNESS MADE FROM NIGHTMARES, 7

The same DISCORDANT STRINGS RISE as we ZOOM OUT - light
glistens off the surface, until the black mass shudders and
rolls, revealing GREEN TENDRILS drowning in a pool of milk.
Soon, we recognise the details: they are the intricate parts
of VASILLY's pretty green eye.

FATIMA (O.S.)

Vasily! ... Vasily!

8 INT. BEDROOM, FLAT - CONTINUOUS 8

VASILLY anxiously turns away from the mirror just as FATIMA
rushes into the room, her clothes stained with LUKE's blood.

FATIMA

The fuck are you doing?

VASILLY
Did you, did you call them?

FATIMA
They're not gonna be here for
another hour.

FATIMA changes into a clean top, chucks on her trainers.

VASILLY
Wait, wait, where are you going?

FATIMA
They told me to get ice for his
fingertips...

VASILLY
... Please don't leave.

FATIMA
... What?!

VASILLY freezes, can't bring himself to say what he wants.

FATIMA (CONT'D)
Our friend's bleeding out in there
and you're hiding away in here!

VASILLY
'Cause I don't think it's safe.

FATIMA
The fuck are you talking about?

VASILLY
I don't know, I don't fucking know,
but I felt it, I felt this, this
thing come over me, as he was
telling me how great his day was---
and the second it did, he---

FATIMA stares at him blankly, can't believe her ears.

FATIMA
Are you high right now?

VASILLY
No.

FATIMA
Well you're not making any sense
and how you've made this about you
is beyond me.

VASILLY
Because Yiayia said---

FATIMA

Enough with all her jealous gaze
bullshit! It was a freak accident.
Say it.

VASILLY

... It was a freak accident.

FATIMA

Now I have to help our friend.

VASILLY

... What if something else happens?

FATIMA

(frustrated)

Don't give him a knife and you
should be fine.

FATIMA hurries out. We STAY on VASILLY as he takes another
deep breath, trying to expel the anxiety when---

LUKE (O.S.)

Vas? ... Are you there? ... I don't
wanna be alone.

9

INT. FLAT - MOMENTS LATER

9

VASILLY creeps into the open-plan lounge/kitchen. His eyes
lock onto the back of the sofa. All we can see is LUKE's arm
raised, wrapped in a tea towel, soaked in blood.

VASILLY moves round the sofa and sits down, facing LUKE, who
lies motionless, staring at the ceiling, pale-skinned and
sweaty. When LUKE speaks, his voice is soft - eerily calm.

LUKE

I imagine this is what being on
your death bed feels like...

VASILLY

You'd hope I wasn't the only person
beside you...

LUKE

Knowing my luck.

(somber)

You don't know how lucky you are to
have someone who cares for you like
Fats does. It's tiring being alone.

CLOSE ON: LUKE as that same melancholia sets back in. He
glances up at his bloody hand.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Can people still draw without their
fingertips?

VASILLY musters a nod. LUKE isn't convinced - he picks up his vape from his chest, takes a long drag.

LUKE (CONT'D)

I really felt like this was my time, you know?

VASILLY half-smiles, sympathetic.

LUKE (CONT'D)

Like all those years of struggling to make ends meet, working every shite job under the sun, stealing hours in the night just so I can draw, was finally all worth it. That I wasn't being delusional. You've no idea how good it felt leaving all that behind, now getting paid, really well, to do something I love. I can't let that go---

CUE VASILLY'S GREEN EYES AS LUKE TAKES A DRAG ON HIS VAPE. SUDDENLY, IT SPARKS - AND THEN **BANG** - THE VAPE EXPLODES IN LUKE'S HAND.

VASILLY falls back on the floor as a HIGH-PITCHED FREQUENCY RINGS OUT LIKE TINNITUS.

He looks up at LUKE lying next to him, SCREAMING IN SILENCE, CLUTCHING HIS SCORCHED HAND WITH HIS FINGERLESS ONE. LUKE clambers to his feet, knocking into furniture, and staggers to the kitchen sink where he turns on the tap.

COLD WATER SHOOTS OUT. THE HIGH-PITCHED FREQUENCY CUTS - SOUND SLAMS BACK IN. LUKE holds his burned hand under the running water, crying, sobbing, wincing.

ON VASSILY: standing in disbelief - his breathing shallow, his eyes wide with fear - until, something shifts inside him.

ON LUKE: still crying, his hand under the water, when VASILLY creeps INTO FRAME behind him with a petrified expression.

VASILLY

When are you going to Berlin?

LUKE

You're asking me that **now**?!

VASILLY

I'm tryna keep your mind occupied.

LUKE

Next month!!

VASILLY

Is it--- Is it all expenses paid?

LUKE
OBVIOUSLY!!!

CUE GREEN EYES. CUE THE TAP SHOOTING OUT BOILING HOT WATER.
LUKE HOWLS LIKE A FERAL ANIMAL AS THE WATER SCALDS HIS SKIN.

VASILLY
Nope, nope, nope.

LUKE (CONT'D)
What the fuck is happeni---

VASILLY squeezes his eyes shut, plugs his ears with his fingers and SCREAMS:

VASILLY (CONT'D)
LALALALALALALALALALALALALALALALALALA!!

VASILLY spins on his heels and we're right with him, HAND-HELD, rushing down the corridor just as FATIMA returns home with a shopping bag filled with ice.

FATIMA
Vas----

The moment he sees her, he does a U-turn, still screaming with his fingers plugged in, as he pelts...

10 INTO THE BEDROOM, 10

and SLAMS the door shut. He stumbles to the vanity mirror. Pulls down the bags under his eyes. Stares into his pupils.

ECU: VASILLY'S EYE, BUT THIS TIME SOMETHING SWIMS OVER IT.

He stumbles back. Grabs his sharpened pencil from earlier. Raises it inches from his pupil - ready to scoop it out of his socket.

FATIMA bursts through the door. VASILLY whips round, pencil outstretched.

VASILLY
DON'T COME NEAR ME!

FATIMA
Vas--- What the fuck?

VASILLY (CONT'D)
DON'T LOOK AT ME!

Trembling, he inches past her and bolts out the bedroom.

11 INT. CORRIDOR, BLOCK OF FLATS - NIGHT 11

VASILLY sprints out of the flat, racing down the corridor - stopping at the lifts, hammering the button.

FATIMA (O.S.)
VASILLY!

The LIFT DOORS DING OPEN. VASILLY leaps...

12

INSIDE,

12

slamming the button. The doors begin to close, but FATIMA wedges between them. VASILLY stumbles back, eyes shut.

VASILLY

It's not safe, I'm not safe!

She jumps inside, hits the STOP button - the doors left open.

FATIMA

Look at me. LOOK AT ME!

VASILLY takes a leap of faith, looks into her desperate eyes.

FATIMA (CONT'D)

I don't know what the fuck's happened, but you're scaring the hell outta me!

VASILLY

I can't make it stop...

FATIMA

Make *what* stop?

VASILLY struggles to articulate himself.

FATIMA (CONT'D)

Whatever it is it's gonna be okay---
I'm right here, we can sort this
together... I love you... Please...

VASILLY can see how much he means to her, but more importantly, how much she means to him. He crumbles into her. She holds him tightly as he begins to sob his jealousy away. Eventually, he rests his head against hers as they gaze into each other's teary eyes.

VASILLY

I love you. I'm so lucky to have you...

FATIMA smiles. VASILLY decks her with a kiss for the ages.

FROM THE FOYER: VASILLY and FATIMA stand in the middle of the lift, lost in their kiss, when suddenly--- THE CABLES GROAN, THE LIFT JOLTS, THEN PLUNGES OUT OF SIGHT.

We're left staring at the empty shaft as we hear VASILLY and FATIMA SCREAMING TO THEIR DEATH, until they're CUT SHORT by the SOUND of a HORRIBLE IMPACT ten floors below.

Finally, we PAN ROUND to reveal LUKE standing in the corridor, having been enviously watching the beauty of their relationship this whole time. His eyes well with tears, and with that lasting tragic expression ULTRABEAT's PRETTY GREEN EYES begins to play.