

# DEATH IS FOR LOSERS!

Written and to be Directed by

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INT. FREYA'S LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

A modern world through a B&W lens. The view is a WIDE one, showing off two couches with a woman to spare for each.

The left is occupied by ILEANA, buttoned-up and close-fitted. Not in a sexy way... rather, her tense nature extends to the clothes on her back. Which is how she lies on the couch after she puts her smartphone in a pocket, arms crossed and with a knee positioned to make a little hill. She's not angry. Not yet. This is just her natural state of being.

The right is occupied by FREYA, opened free and loosely. ILEANA'S opposite in a variety of ways. Only her legs rest on the couch for she lies on the floor, looking as if she fell off a chair and didn't bother getting up. Her head's on a pillow, and her hands strum an imaginary guitar as if she's figuring out a new song.

In big, bold, red letters, the title appears onscreen. The sole break from the monochrome. A woman humming the first few notes of "Hall of the Mountain King" can be heard faintly.

FREYA

(annoyed)

What were we talking about again?

ILEANA

Sorry.

FREYA

No, it's fine. It's never rude when someone interrupts me for a half-hour phone call. I loves me a one-sided conversation to listen to.

ILEANA

Cripes, I apologized, didn't I? It was my brother about a--

FREYA

I'm just busting your ovaries, relax. Or are you serious like a heart attack after you finished your first album? Sure, yours truly is on her third, but...

ILEANA

(sighing)

Yeah, it is nice, isn't it?

FREYA

What're you gonna call it, anyway? Vespertine? Witching Hour? Scary Monsters and Super Creeps?

ILEANA

I don't wanna be quite so derivative, sorry. "Thanks for Buying Me."

ILEANA waves a hand across her as if the words were in big, bright lights. Then crosses her arms as if the reality of their blandness hit.

FREYA

You couldn't have gone all Burroughs and pieced together a title from a bunch of words?

ILEANA

I'm not sure I wanna be associated with a guy who shot his wife in the head while playing a game.

FREYA

"Glory City Magick." "Asylum Channel Deadly." "Unexpected Wonder Hell." See? Easy-peasy.

ILEANA

(threateningly)

"Paralyzed Freya Torso." Or would you rather me try out my William Tell routine?

FREYA

I get it, I get it. Wait, what were we talking about before we were interrupted?

ILEANA

Giggles and shenanigans.

FREYA

Oh yeah, fuckery and shenanigans. How about that for an album title?

ILEANA

Too Tori Amos.

The view switches to a MEDIUM PROFILE of FREYA, with ILEANA slightly out-of-focus behind her. FREYA drops her "strumming" hands to her stomach.

FREYA

Remember how I was saying that this is a great time to be alive as a musician? Because you can cut out the labels and put out your own shit?

ILEANA

If you didn't mind the hussle, yeah.

FREYA

You're talking to a magnet for  
spotlight. A recognition magneto.  
A-- What I don't like is having to  
have my face on things.

ILEANA

I'm skipping that whole  
whoring-my-face-out phase of my  
career. Why do you need your face  
plastered?

FREYA

(matter-of-factly)

So they'll know it's me. It'd be  
fabulous if I didn't have to, but  
dems the breaks.

ILEANA

Dems your breaks, maybe. I never  
understood why people think songs  
need faces.

FREYA

My point is, the problem with being  
a magnet and the problem with my  
face being my brand is that weirdos  
come outta nowhere.

ILEANA

The kind who wanna touch you?

FREYA

No, I can deal with that lot with  
that trick ya taught me.

FREYA strikes a goofy martial arts pose.

FREYA

(cont'd)

Hi-YAH! The ones I'm talking about  
are the ones who hate me for having  
the "audacity" to be a lady artist.

INSERT of an EXTREME CLOSE-UP of ILEANA'S eyes, lit by a  
stream of light across them, as they dart suspiciously to  
FREYA.

ILEANA turns on her side towards FREYA, propping her head on  
a hand, as she asks...

ILEANA

...they hate you because you have  
boobs?

FREYA

Like my name and tender voice  
didn't give the game away. They're  
(MORE)

FREYA (cont'd)  
not even threateningly large. I'm  
at the end of my wits with hate  
from dudes AND broads. And I'm just  
as legitimately confused as you  
because I don't know any of them,  
and because they can't hurt me.

ILEANA  
Not everyone can turn being ignored  
all their life into a superpower.

FREYA  
I'd like to think that me not  
responding positively or negatively  
to opinions is like emotional  
aikido.

ILEANA  
Hey, don't try to use a black belt  
to explain that you're dead inside.

FREYA  
Sorry.

The view switches to a MED. SHOT of ILEANA as she starts to  
think of something.

FREYA  
(cont'd)  
And if people make fun of me,  
great. I won. Because that means  
they can't make a decent argument  
about my art.

ILEANA  
I'll make a note of that. Dunno  
why, but that reminded me of  
Loretta.

FREYA  
Why would that remind you of her?

ILEANA shoots FREYA a look that says, "Weren't you  
listening?"

ILEANA  
Didn't I just say-- Ugh.

FREYA  
And who the fuck is Loretta?

ILEANA  
Y'know... My stalker. And if you  
even joke about me being on the  
phone with her, I'm writing your  
number in every bathroom of Wrigley  
Field.

FREYA

You know how much I hate beer farts and team spirit. I didn't believe anything you said about her until that day at the Highland Borders.

ILEANA

I know, I was there.

FREYA

While you were TELLING me about her.

ILEANA

I said I know.

FREYA

And she was sitting in the cafe! Ooo, the look she was giving you.

ILEANA

Damnit, woman, I know! She would've ripped my clothes off by the creamers and cinnamon if you didn't pretend we were dating. Oh, I didn't tell you the post-script to that.

FREYA

Appendix me.

ILEANA

There's not much to say. I haven't heard from her since.

FREYA

She probably threw herself off the watertower. Or into it.

ILEANA squints her eyes, looking for an answer to a question she's been asking herself...

ILEANA

(annoyed)

I cannot remember why I brought her up.

FREYA

And I have no idea.

...and, in defeat, goes back to crossing her arms after rubbing the one she's been leaning on.

The view cuts back to FREYA'S angle.

FREYA

(cont'd)

A touch of the Alzheimer's, maybe?

ILEANA

Shush.

FREYA

It can get you at any age, y'know.

ILEANA

I'm just hungry. Why'd I let you talk me into eating a slow-cooked dinner?

FREYA goes back to "strumming."

FREYA

Because this dinner'll be the best batch of burgers you ever had.

ILEANA

How's the song coming along?

FREYA

I've got a few notes going, but can't think of anything to say.

ILEANA

Woe to the republic.

ILEANA takes her phone out.

ILEANA

(cont'd)

Care for a little inspiration?

FREYA

Like what?

ILEANA hands FREYA the phone, and the new bearer looks at a video playing.

ILEANA

Making fun of people is great for getting the juices going and a fine American tradition, as your P.O. Box can proudly attest.

Worry starts to creep upon FREYA'S face as she watches it.

FREYA

What's she shaking?

ILEANA

Her money-maker, I think.

FREYA

Who carries change for a nickel?

She passes the phone back to its owner, with an INSERT of it changing hands, who puts it back in her pocket and goes to her default position.

FREYA

(cont'd)

I'd admire her temerity, but some people gotta learn to accept defeat.

ILEANA

She probably has a profound sense of self-delusion. Inspired yet?

FREYA

No, but I do have a hankering for ultra-flat pancakes, for some reason.

She smacks her lips.

ILEANA

Maybe you can slow-cook those, too... Where were you last night? I called, but you didn't answer or get back to me.

FREYA

Would you believe that I helped run a train on Johnny Depp?

ILEANA

No, Freya. No. You wouldn't be able to handle him, anyway.

FREYA

It's a train, I'd have figured it out. I said goodbye.

ILEANA

To who?

FREYA

What, you mean. Griffith.

ILEANA turns back to her side.

ILEANA

Wow, I haven't heard anything about you and that town in... in...

FREYA

Almost ten years. I kept meaning to go back and check up on people but... I was headed to the grocery store down the street to get stuff for tonight. Twenty minutes tops, right? I got everything and was at the light...

INSERT of FREYA'S left hand drifting in that direction.

FREYA

(cont'd)

...and I turned left. Before I knew it, I was aimlessly driving east while Iamx was singing about being part of the unified field.

ILEANA

I remember the one night I was with you on an aimless drive west with La Roux crooning about going in for the kill. Going in for a thrill.

FREYA AND ILEANA

Whether we like it or not.

ILEANA

Like when we got to that terrifyingly high bridge in Lockport. Great for jumping. Not that I tried. Fuck that heights bullshit.

FREYA

I did the Griffith drive practically every day for two years straight. Then, after stealing someone's fella, I stopped.

ILEANA

Pfft, "stealing." It was a heist of INCEPTION proportions.

FREYA

Hush you. I could've done that drive blindfolded, which is probably how I ended up there without thinking. Stop signs be damned. At the same time, the drive felt completely new to me.

ILEANA

Touch of the Alzheimer's?

FREYA

I think it's because no place represented me as a normal person better than there, and since being a professional artist is as abnormal as you can get--

ILEANA

Barring Proteus Syndrome with a leprosy chaser.

FREYA

--I guess I kinda did it, ultimately, to say g'bye to  
(MORE)

FREYA (cont'd)  
civilian life.  
(gasping)  
Oh, you don't know!

ILEANA  
Of course, I don't know!

FREYA  
I deposited my first five-figure  
check last week!

ILEANA  
I knew your hands and throat were  
good for something. Depp won't.  
(taunting)  
Depp will never know.

FREYA  
I can quit that delivery job!

ILEANA  
And stop reeking of engine oil and  
car parts!

They high-five each other. ILEANA sniffs her hand, then  
makes a disappointed noise.

FREYA  
I'll kinda miss the gig, though.

ILEANA  
Why, you enjoy having rough palms  
and overdeveloped muscles in your  
driving foot?

FREYA  
Sure, it sucked that my boss didn't  
trust I-Pass which meant that I had  
to carry a jar of change wherever I  
went... but the long drives weren't  
all bad.

ILEANA  
What's the perk of being caught in  
Chicago traffic besides the  
maddening boredom? And the chance  
of heat stroke, if the truck's A/C  
fucks off?

FREYA  
Pocket vibrators tend to keep  
things exciting.

ILEANA  
That's... umm...

FREYA

I'm worried that my girly bits  
might be comfortably numb now,  
though. Or calloused. Those traffic  
jams go on forEVER.

The view goes WIDE and high again as ILEANA sits up in  
frustration and crosses her legs, Indian-style, while  
stretching her arms, favoring her leaning one.

ILEANA

Enough about your stiff kitten.

FREYA

Remember why you remembered Loretta  
yet?

ILEANA

No, and I aims to keep it that way.  
I can't have that one ruining it  
for the rest of us.

FREYA starts to sit up and use her couch as a backrest.

FREYA

(to herself)

Hard wood's murder on the spine.

(to Ileana)

"Us?"

ILEANA

Womenfolk. The fewer setback  
bitches we have stalking their way  
into a crush, the better. I hate  
having to defend myself from the  
socially-challenged. I mean, the  
hard to love. I mean, setback  
bitches. Fuck labels.

FREYA is, naturally, taken aback.

FREYA

Umm... Breathe?

ILEANA

Sorry. Shelly was always eager for  
new labels. Never knew someone who  
treated being PC like a fashion  
magazine subscriber.

FREYA

Is that why you two broke up?

ILEANA

I didn't tell you?

FREYA

Nope.

ILEANA, not wanting to tackle that subject yet, hides the target but stays on the field.

ILEANA

I shoulda realized that we were a bad fit because of burlesque.

FREYA

I noticed that you stopped talking about those shows after you started dating her. That must've been agony for you.

ILEANA

No idea. You have no idea. I've had the DT's for swing music and pasties.

FREYA

Why do you like burlesque dancers so much?

ILEANA

Because they're sexy on their terms. Like Goth chicks. And librarians. You don't look like they do or dance their way unless you want to. It's your choice, babe.

FREYA

Well, I haven't made the best choices, so... Wait. Librarians?

ILEANA

I bet I could beat you. In the misery business.

FREYA

You know that's like a butter-eating contest, right?

ILEANA tilts her head, confused.

FREYA

(cont'd, sighing)

No matter what anyone says, no matter what anyone THINKS, NO ONE wins a butter-eating contest.

ILEANA

HA! Ew. I'm game. C'mon.

(whining)

C'moooooon!

The view ping-pongs twixt the two in MED. P.O.V. SHOTS.

FREYA

Stop.

ILEANA grins smugly.

FREYA

(cont'd)

This kinda counts, but doesn't count enough, but I'm gonna mention it anyway because it's been bugging the fuck outta me for almost three years.

ILEANA

Talk to me, Zelnot.

FREYA

There was a guy I met in a store. Let's call him... Rusty.

ILEANA

Ooo, I know who you're talking about. Parts, anyway.

FREYA

That's nice. I'm still using his alias. He and I were enough alike that I thought I should ask him out. One night, he invited me over to his place with some of his friends. That's when I saw her.

ILEANA

Eva Green?

FREYA

(ominously)

Nega-Freya.

ILEANA

Damnit. You're gonna have to explain that one.

FREYA

Explain I shall. Turns out Rusty and Nega-Freya were kinda an item.

ILEANA

"Kinda?"

FREYA looks like she's having an internal conflict.

FREYA

Rusty just got out of an ancient relationship that ended with him hopping from friend's house to friend's house until he got to his current house. So, lucky-lucky me, he was off the market.

INSERT of FREYA'S index finger making a point.

FREYA

(cont'd)

However. Rusty and Nega-Freya, they swore themselves to each other. Whenever he was ready to date again, they were gonna get married and all that jazz.

ILEANA

Marry before dating? How is this daffy bitch Nega-you now?

FREYA

She had everything I wanted and was everything I didn't want to be. He was a good guy and took care of her...

(increasingly faster & angrier)

She, on the other hand, was a lazy alcoholic who spent her nights sitting in a corner in her pajamas while playing games on her fucking phone, and spent her days sleeping, probably, in that same corner. When things didn't go her way, she'd be in the goddamn bathroom either punching a hole in the wall or drawing a dotted fucking line around her wrist with a marker. He coddled the bitch that night and fucking washed the line off while fucking being all fucking sweet to her. I wish I had a fucking guy to rub my damn hands after a long-ass day and shit. What about me? What about Rick?

ILEANA

You're calling yourself "Rick" again.

FREYA regains her composure.

FREYA

Sorry.

ILEANA

(tauntingly)

You and Rusty could've been friends forevs, y'know? The friendzone doesn't do it for ya?

FREYA

I guess I'm a bitch because I have enough friends and I'm only interested in dates.

FREYA locks eyes with her friend.

FREYA  
(cont'd)  
Quid pro quo, Clarice.

ILEANA  
Nuh-uh. You said that you just wanted to get some shit off your chest. You still gotta chomp some butter.

FREYA shudders.

FREYA  
I really wish I never made that analogy. Fine. My mom let me date my half-brother because she didn't have the heart to tell me the truth. He and I had different mothers and didn't know we were related and Dad was... He had issues.

ILEANA  
HE had issues? You were making out under your family tree.

FREYA  
We didn't know, ok?

ILEANA  
How long did your mother let you two go steady? Did she catch him with his head in your lap? Or worse?

FREYA  
I don't wanna talk about it anymore.

ILEANA  
What, it's not like the two of you had an evening of the devil's business.

FREYA looks away.

ILEANA  
(cont'd)  
YOU TWO HAD AN EVENING OF TH--

FREYA  
Damn it, no! Fuck no! I just... knew what a man's junk felt like in my hand because... of... We broke up as soon as we found out!

ILEANA  
Family gatherings must be amusing.

FREYA

Haven't been to one yet. Now. Quid.  
Pro. Quo.

ILEANA

Land O' Lakes, here I come. I guess  
I should talk about Shelly, Shelly,  
quite contrary.

FREYA

The love of your life who left you  
suicidal? You even tried to hang  
yourself by your hair from a  
ceiling fan. I always wondered why  
you never used a bedsheet.

ILEANA

Me too.

(to herself)

You can do this.

(to Freya)

You know how people say that they  
can't choose the ones they love?  
And how Shelly loved going to the  
fair during open season? Well, I  
found out why, a few months ago.  
And... And she...

FREYA sits next to ILEANA and holds her hand while the view  
slowly ZOOMS-IN from a MED. to a CLOSE TWO-SHOT.

FREYA

You can tell me.

ILEANA

I got a call late one night from a  
cop saying that I had to pick her  
up from the station. I was  
surprised because I thought she was  
sleeping next to me. The cop said  
that she was caught on the  
fairgrounds, but didn't say what  
she was caught doing. Said it'd be  
better for her to tell me. When I  
got to the station and said who I  
was there for, everyone looked at  
me like they felt so sorry for me.  
Even the drug dealer. I was  
surprised when I saw Shelly behind  
bars because I was expecting her to  
be covered in blood or something.  
Just a blanket, barefoot. She  
wouldn't look at me, and I said,  
"...what's wrong? What's wrong,  
sweetie?" Then she started shouting  
"I LOVE MR. ZIPPY!! I LOVE MR.  
ZIPPY!!" over and over again.

FREYA

Mr. Zippy... She... The roller  
coaster?

ILEANA

Yeah.

INSERT of FREYA'S hand loosening its grip over ILEANA'S ever so slightly.

As ILEANA goes on, FREYA tries to be there for her friend but can't help getting swept up in disbelief.

ILEANA

(cont'd)

Janitor caught her dry-humping the second loopy loop. He heard her and thought she was in a booth until a shoe hit his head. She thought the cherry picker he used to get her was a jealous lover. Did you know a woman's married to the Eiffel Tower? Erika Labrie. I mean, Erika Eiffel. Lesbians, if you're curious. They call it "objectophilia." The owner of the fair was remarkably understanding. Didn't press charges, and even offered her a job so she and Mr. Zippy could spend their nights together. The janitor wears a safety helmet. Shelly's Mrs. Zippy now. I got something in the mail that looked like a wedding invite, but I couldn't go.

(to herself)

I couldn't go.

The view goes cold and WIDE as FREYA gives up trying to be comforting for the only worthwhile reason.

FREYA

I gotta... pee.

She breaks away and goes upstairs while her friend sulks.

The sound slowly drops out as everything gets slower and the view fades to a MED. SHOT of ILEANA, then again to a CLOSE PROFILE of her left side. In the background, FREYA sits on the stairs, and a cushion, and the sound and vision slowly comes back as she tries getting ILEANA'S attention.

FREYA

(cont'd)

Hey!

She sounds like she's under water, but her friend finally notices her. FREYA beckons her close with a wave. ILEANA obliges, but she stops short of the stairs, choosing to put

her back to the bit of wall dividing the steps from the room.

The view switches to a MED. SHOT of ILEANA as her back touches the wall, TILTED-UP enough to see, through a gap in the wall, FREYA sitting. ILEANA looks dazed, and her friend looks concerned.

FREYA  
(cont'd)  
Are you slipping?

ILEANA nods.

FREYA  
(cont'd)  
Remember what we agreed: never make a decision when you're angry or a promise when you're happy. Makes you wonder about divorce and marriage, doesn't it?

ILEANA looks over her shoulder at FREYA and shakes her head as if to ask, "What the fuck are you talking about?"

Her friend's voice sounds normal from here onward.

FREYA  
(cont'd)  
You wanna kill Shelly? I wanna kill that bitch at the store.

ILEANA shoots a familiar look.

FREYA  
(cont'd)  
My father wasn't known to be a lover. He was more like a taker. Especially with women. It wouldn't surprise me if I was a rape baby. If only that was on a bib, right? They'd sell great on college campuses. The best thing about alleged rapists is sometimes, wow, you get to call them "convicted rapists." But no one in my town ever bothered with finger-pointing. Too busy putting things behind them in their dump trucks full of prom photos and candy wrappers and crushed dreams and track marks. Because of all that, my father keeps working at the store. That bitch. So if you wanna kill, I've got the shovel.

The view goes behind FREYA in a MED. SHOT as ILEANA innocently peeks around the corner.

ILEANA

...really?

FREYA

Mm-hmm. But you have to do something for me-- with me first.

ILEANA

Buy the buckshot? Braid the hangin' rope? Build the brazen bull?

FREYA

Sit down and help me with our song.

ILEANA

(whining)

But people need murdering.

FREYA

Oh, Ileana, how I know... I got a list like Alice when she was ten feet tall. However, if we're gonna murder, we're gonna get locked up. If we're gonna get locked up, I'd rather do it knowing that I finished one more song.

ILEANA

They probably don't have recording studios on Bitch Planet.

FREYA

So sit down and help me astound.

ILEANA

Murderers do get groupies... and groupies do buy merchandise...

FREYA

Exactly. By the time we get out, we'll be millionaires.

ILEANA

I wanna buy a yacht to have orgies on. Call it the SS Unexpected Wonder Hell and wear--

FREYA

How 'bout you buy your ass a spot on a step and be my muse?

The view becomes WIDE as ILEANA sits a few steps away from FREYA. The two are framed by a gap in the wall.

ILEANA

How's this gonna work, anyway? I never collaborated before. Too afraid of throwing the other person  
(MORE)

ILEANA (cont'd)  
out the window into oncoming  
traffic and laughing at the  
carnage.

FREYA  
Ditto. I was gonna try using the  
song I was futzing with earlier,  
but that's my song. I wanna make  
OUR song.

ILEANA  
Ok, Elton John.

FREYA  
Aw, now I wanna hear "Crocodile  
Rock." Focus, Freya. Wait. We could  
do that.

ILEANA  
Won't he sue us on the back of  
Bowie's ghost? Hmm. Never thought  
I'd go straight for a ghost.

FREYA  
I don't mean that, and I'd push you  
down the rest of these stairs if  
you tried getting between me and  
the Thin White Spook. I mean we  
could take a FREE song, and build  
on that. Like an orchestral song or  
something.

ILEANA  
OOO!!

FREYA  
Yes?

ILEANA  
What about that ominous one about  
the Alps? Uh... "Hall of the  
Mountain King!"

FREYA stifles a laugh.

FREYA  
Sure, muse. It also helps to come  
up with a title first. Gives the  
lyrics something to live up to.

ILEANA  
I don't wanna go Burroughs... I  
wanna kill Shelly because she left  
me for something I hope gives her  
gangrene... and your father's a  
loser... "Death is for Losers?"

FREYA

"Death is for Losers!" Very Alanis  
Morissette.

INSERT of their applauding hands.

FREYA

(cont'd)

Start humming and I'll start  
lyricking.

ILEANA does what she's told as the view slowly goes  
out-of-focus, and as FREYA shakes her head with a smile  
while taking out a pen and pad.

FADE TO BLACK.

WHITE LETTERS ON BLACK CARD: "They ended up not murdering  
anyone, but they did make a song currently annoying you in  
phone commercials. It's already a triple-platinum hit.

"Freya found out she was a rape baby, and put an ad about  
her father in papers across the nation. He and a horde of  
grad students are currently serving time on Bitch Planet.

"Ileana never did remember why she brought up Loretta, but  
she did get a nice surprise dressed as one of her students  
after her first concert. Loretta now is also on BP time."