

"YERIEL THE COQUÍ"

By

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This is a Rich Marks the Spot

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FADE IN:

1. INT. DELGADO HOME - NIGHT

Pleasant music plays as we start our evening with the DELGADOS. MR. DELGADO, a middle-aged Puerto Rican man, is watching the final moments of Wild At Heart. His wife, a middle-aged white woman, MRS. DELGADO dozes on the sofa - a half-empty glass of strawberry milk sitting on the end table next to her. As the movie plays, we push down the hallway leading away from the living room. Nicolas Cage singing "Love Me Tender" fades as the muffled sound of punk grows stronger - at the end of the hall lies the unassuming portal to the greatest frog-based tragedy the world has ever seen. A faint red glow is visible around the frame of the door and in the keyhole, giving the ominous impression of a hellish portal. We push through the keyhole into -

2. INT. JEREMY'S ROOM - NIGHT

ANARCHY!! Sex Pistols blares over the stereo. Fourteen-year-old JEREMY DELGADO's room is every conservative commentator's fear realized - defaced boy band posters cover the room, a cross hangs inverted on the wall, and the mix of blacklight/red light makes your stomach writhe.

The blood red glow suffuses the room as Jeremy headbangs to the music, holding a basic kitchen knife in his right hand. Before him sits the open terrarium of YERIEL, his pet coqui frog. Suddenly Jeremy stops head banging and stabs the knife into the air. Shit's about to get weird.

JEREMY

Oh, great Sid Vicious! I beseech you, in the name of all that is plagued and wretched, send unto me your avatar! With this sacrifice, fed unto the unwilling, I open myself to your servant!

Jeremy than places the knife into the palm of his left hand, then seems to reconsider and instead pricks his finger, drawing out a small drop of blood. He drops the knife as he turns to his frog.

JEREMY

Feast, unclean beast! Feast upon the corrupting bounty, the sweetest and foulest of nectars!

Yeriel gives a half-hearted hop away as Jeremy reaches for him.

JEREMY

Ah, shit, shit! Hold still you little fucker.

Jeremy finally gets a hold of Yeriel, holding out his finger. The frog just looks at it blankly.

JEREMY

And now, accept the lord of darkness into your soul!

Yeriel is jabbed in the face a few times as the bloody finger tries to find his mouth, with uncomfortable *squelching* sounds as one of the jabs hits his eye.

JEREMY

(whiny) Come on, ugh, hold still. There!

Shlump! Jeremy gets the bloody finger in Yeriel's mouth. The world dolly-zooms into the frog, his eyes sharpen and clarify as the music grows louder and more discordant. The fires of hell burn within the pupils as a hunger grows within him.

With a sharp snap the music cuts out, the lights switch back to normal, and we see Mr. Delgado standing in the doorway with his hand on the light switch.

MR. DELGADO

(offscreen) Alright, turn that crap off. It's time for bed. Ugh, Jer, put that poor frog down. I'm not paying for another one if you -

JEREMY

I know, Dad, gawd. Get out of my room!

Jeremy drops Yeriel back in his terrarium, sloppily putting the lid back on. Their conversation fades into the background as we stay on Yeriel, his unnaturally clear eyes staring into the abyss of creation.

MR. DELGADO

(fading) Why do you have a knife in here? Seriously, Jer, you need to quit this kind of stuff. People are going to start...

We slow zoom into Yeriel's eyes as the conversation fades away.

3. INT. JEREMY'S ROOM - EARLY MORNING

Smash cut to a top-down view of Jeremy asleep in his room. The furniture in the room makes an upside down "U" shape - Yeriel's terrarium is by the window across from Jeremy's bed, and the two are connected by a desk.

We switch to watching Jeremy sleep in his bed peacefully. In the background, Yeriel can be seen sitting in the terrarium, his eyes clearly visible in the gloom.

YERIEL

Co-Kee.

Jeremy sits straight up, blocking our view of Yeriel.

JEREMY

(snort) Uh, huh?

He falls back to the bed, revealing Yeriel has moved from the terrarium to the windowsill.

YERIEL

(louder) Co-Kee!

JEREMY

Gah, what?

Jeremy bolts back up, rubbing his ear and listening.

JEREMY

Uhh...

Jeremy falls back to the bed and Yeriel is ON THE DESK! With murder in his eyes, the frog gives his loudest call yet.

YERIEL

(loud) Co-KEE!

Jeremy snaps awake, mouth open to scream at the offending frog.

JEREMY

Gawd, shut up - aaugh mmmf!

As he sits up, Yeriel strikes! The frog launches forward, filling the boy's mouth. Jeremy's throat bulges as Yeriel claws his way inside.

JEREMY

Ugh, uh, augh!

Jeremy gags as the frog pushes deeper into his gullet.

YERIEL

(muffled, but louder than before) Co-KEE!

The call sends agony ripping through Jeremy, and his stomach pulses with the call.

JEREMY

Uh? Eh ow!

YERIEL

(loudest yet, but still vaguely muffled) CO-KEE!

A larger bulge in Jeremy's stomach as the call gains strength. Now Jeremy is clawing at his stomach, shredding his skin as he tries to dig the frog out before -

YERIEL

(loudest, deafening) CO-

Jeremy's stomach pulses.

YERIEL

(no longer muffled) KEE!

A meaty explosion erupts from Jeremy's stomach as the cry blasts him apart. He falls backward, very, very dead. Yerial climbs out of the ruinous cavern that used to be the boy's stomach.

YERIEL

Co-Kee.

MR. DELGADO

(offscreen) Would you go to bed already!

MRS. DELGADO

(offscreen, slurred) Don't yell at him! But, honey, if you could throw a blanket over his cage?

Yerial's throat works rapidly as he hops towards the open window. He perches on the windowsill before giving one, final -

YERIEL

Co-Kee!

MR. DELGADO

(offscreen) That's it! I'm making frog legs.

MRS. DELGADO
(offscreen, slurred) Stop it, stop! You
can't do that to him it's his only pet.

Their argument fades as Yeriel hops down the street, a bloody sunrise in the distance.

4. EXT. DESTINY DRIVE - MORNING

It's a rough morning for MIKHAIL.

MIKHAIL
I am *not* missing the bus. Not today.

The lanky, curly haired man rushes down the street, named Destiny Drive. He's got a strong community-college-teaching-assistant-in-1986 vibe to him, complete with porno stache and old-style briefcase. He's also about 28 years old.

MIKHAIL
Shit!

He stumbles as he almost drops his phone, plugged into his ears by dirty corded earbuds. He's juggling his phone, briefcase, and an old, stained thermos. He also decides this would be the perfect time for a smoke.

MIKHAIL
(full mouth, around a cigarette) Come on,
come on...

Mikhail contorts himself around his cig pack and keeps plowing on. So distracted, he doesn't notice as his heavy shoe slams down, millimeters from the face of a murder.

WHAM!! Yeriel freezes as the foot nearly crushes him, the moment stretching on for what seems like forever. Mikhail forges on, grumbling. His lanky form reflected in the coqui's eyes as Yeriel selects his next victim. Vengeance will be swift.

5. EXT. DESTINY DRIVE - LATER

YERIEL
Co-Kee!

MIKHAIL
Ah? Oh, oh no!

Mikhail jumps at the unexpected noise, destroying his precarious equilibrium. With a cascading crash, the briefcase, thermos, and newspaper all tumble to the ground. The cell phone bounces on the end of the headphone cord, tugging his

head down before popping off the cord and crashing to the ground. Blue-note jazz plays through the tinny cell phone speaker.

MIKHAIL

Happy Monday, Mikhail...

He crouches and starts slowly picking up his spilled items. Yeriel watches from the grass nearby, his throat working furiously. Like a lion on the savannah, he watches his prey.

YERIEL

Co-KEE!

MIKHAIL

What is that?

Mikhail is getting frustrated now. His head whips around, looking for the offending sound. He takes a few steps towards the grass where Yeriel lurks. But the sound of a bus pulling up to the stop pulls him back around.

MIKHAIL

Oh, no no no! Wait, wait!

Mikhail rushes to gather up his things, and rushes towards the stop, in even worse shape than before. As he nears the bus stop, he trips, dropping his things again. This time the briefcase explodes open, throwing its contents across the ground. It's a surprisingly small amount of depressing items, like saltine crackers, some scratch paper, and an old calculator.

MIKHAIL

Shit! Shit, shit, shit!

The bus pulls away as Mikhail crawls forward, pathetically collecting his things as he waits for the next bus. Yeriel hops into frame, seeming massive compared to Mikhail's hunched over form. He hops menacingly towards his victim.

5. EXT. BUS STOP - LATER

Mikhail sits at the bust stop, trying to play Frogger on his now-shattered phone. The game's distinct sounds are the only audible noise. The briefcase has been poorly repacked, and his newspaper and some crackers are resting in his lap.

YERIEL

Co-Kee.

Mikhail's head snaps up and looks around.

MIKHAIL

Seriously, what the fuck is that?

YERIEL

Co-Kee.

Mikhail jumps to his feet, spilling the contents of his lap on the ground. His head whips back and forth, eyes wide.

MIKHAIL

Who's out there? What do you want?

Blood. Yeriel wants blood.

YERIEL

(insistently) Co-KEE.

MIKHAIL

Stop *doing* that!

Mikhail whips around, stomping towards the grass. But Yeriel has learned. Safe under the bus stop bench, he needles his prey.

YERIEL

(loudly) CO-KEE!

MIKHAIL

Why is this happening?

Mikhail is breaking down. He stumbles back to the bench, his head in his hands. It's been a rough morning.

YERIEL

(demanding) CO-KEE!

MIKHAIL

(tearfully) Stop. Please, just stop...

Mikhail quivers with expectation. But the dreaded noise never comes. Faintly, we hear an approaching vehicle. He closes his eyes, dropping to his knees and sighing. He starts to collect his things, then looks up, under the bench.

YERIEL

(lustfully) CO-KEE!

MIKHAIL

Auugh!

Faced by the demonic visage of Yeriel, Mikhail lurches backward, and is smashed by a racing ambulance, his body exploding in gory glory.

The ambulance skids to a stop, as chaos breaks out. Yeriel, unnoticed, hops out from under the bench. A single blue eye rolls into the gutter and Yeriel shoots his tongue out.

YERIEL

Slurrp! (wet munching noises)

Paramedics leap out of the ambulance, and one of them, the visibly SHAKEN PARAMEDIC, grabs a medical bag out of the ambulance, standing over the decimated corpse. The ANNOYED PARAMEDIC slowly gets out of the driver side.

SHAKEN PARAMEDIC

Oh my, GOD! Someone call...someone!

ANNOYED PARAMEDIC

Are you serious right now?

SHAKEN PARAMEDIC

Well, we must do something.

As they argue, Yeriel looks down the street, his eyes falling on an unlit neon sign. It reads "COQUI LIQUORS". Heeding the call of destiny, he hops down the street, searching for his next victim.

6. EXT. BUS STOP - LATER

Mikhail's bus rolls up a few moments later. There's a commotion inside as NICO, a disorderly drunken man, is thrown from the bus.

BUS DRIVER

Get off my fucking bus! Goddamned vagrants, stinking the place up.

NICO

Hey, hey! I'm leaving, I'm leaving.

Nico stumbles as the driver bodily throws him from the bus. A few people who get off at the stop give him a wide berth, covering their noses and mouths.

NICO

Hey, mama. Looks like I need a ride, you interested

Nico leers at a young woman who grimaces in disgust. She turns and hurries on her way. For some reason, Nico looks irritated.

NICO

Yeah, eat shit princess. I probably couldn't afford it!

He yells after her, his face visibly red. He hocks a loogie into the grass and rubs his temples.

NICO

I need a fucking drink.

In the distance, there's a faint chirping noise.

YERIEL

(offscreen, faintly) Co-kee.

NICO

Wuzzat?

Nico's head snaps up, looking around. His eyes fall on the distant liquor store, the words "COQUI LIQUOR" dark. Just as he eyes it, the sign crackles to life, as does the smaller "OPEN" sign.

NICO

(exultant) Yeah, baby! That's what I'm talking about!

He hops off, a pep in his step, unaware of the danger he's in.

7. INT. COQUI LIQUORS - CONTINUOUS

Nico rushes into the liquor store, taking a deep breath. It's a seedy, run down liquor store. A single cashier is working, a middle aged woman who's already had a shitty day.

NICO

(inhaling) Ahh! That's the good stuff. Hey, SWEET CHEEKS!

SWEET CHEEKS

What.

NICO

I gotta take a piss.

SWEET CHEEKS

Bathrooms out of order. Sorry.

Nico rolls his eyes.

NICO

Yeah, sure it is. (pause) 'Scuse me a sec.

Nico wanders outside of the liquor store.

8. EXT. COQUI LIQUORS - CONTINUOUS

Nico steps out and steps to the side of the building. He turns away from the camera and begins urinating on the building.

NICO

Hmph, ugh, aahhh...

Cackling at his own wit, he finishes urinating. As he tucks everything away, we pan down to the wet patch of grass, where sits a very, very pissed off frog. As Nico walks away, we see his reflection in Yeriel's eyes.

YERIEL

Co-Kee.

9. INT. COQUI LIQUORS - CONTINUOUS

The automatic doors part as Nico struts in, grinning at Sweet Cheeks.

NICO

Eh, no worries. I found the backup.

SWEET CHEEKS

Fucking prick.

Nico ignores her and wanders towards the back of the liquor store. Unnoticed by either of them, Yeriel hops in through the double doors just before they can close. In the back of his mind, Yeriel wonders if those doors are going to be a problem. But lions don't concern themselves with such questions, and neither do frogs. He gives his hunting call.

YERIEL

Co-Kee.

Nico ignores the call, but Sweet Cheeks looks around, confused. Frustrated, Yeriel hops forward, repeating the call.

YERIEL

Co-Kee.

NICO

(vaguely) Fuck is that?

Unperturbed, the vagrant reaches the back cooler, and whips the door open. He grabs a 40oz bottle of malt liquor with a frog on the label. Twisting the cap off, he sniffs the bottle like a fine wine.

NICO

Hells yeah. Come to Papa.

YERIEL

Co-Kee!

NICO

Hm? (to Yeriel) Oh, nasty. Piss off!

Spotting Yeriel, he snaps his foot out to punt the amphibian across the room. Yeriel dodges, and Nico's foot slams into one of the displays, knocking a bottle off the top shelf, and shifting one to a more precarious position. Yeriel's eyes reflect the teeting bottle as a plan forms.

The fallen bottle crashes to the floor, exploding, and Sweet Cheeks stomps over to Nico.

SWEET CHEEKS

Hey, man. Come on, it barely seven. Hey, you going to pay for that?

Nico regards the bottle in his hand.

NICO

What, this?

She's getting pissed now. Just visible beside her is Yeriel, hopping towards the top rack.

SWEET CHEEKS

Yes, *that*.

NICO

Nope. You've got a fucking infestation in here. You're lucky I don't sue your ass!

Nico gestures at Yeriel, now mostly up the shelves, but Sweet Cheeks doesn't look away.

SWEET CHEEKS

Hey, listen asshole. Pay for the booze, or put it back, I don't care. Just get out!

Nico's temper bursts out, and for a moment, Yeriel senses a kindred soul.

NICO

Would you PISS OFF! I aint paying for infested booze! Don't like it, call the cops! They're out there cleaning up some schmutz, so I bet they've got better shit to do.

Sweet Cheeks stumbles back, she doesn't get paid enough for this shit. Nico chuckles as she retreats.

NICO

That's what I thought. Bitch.

Nico chuckles as he raises the forty to take a long drink. Yeriel, now hidden behind the precarious bottle, gives another call, this one softer.

YERIEL

(softly) Co-Kee.

Nico turns towards the noise. We can see the bottle is a good foot or two above Nico's head, and from where he's at, he can't see Yeriel.

NICO

Fucking hell. What a shithole.

We switch back to Yeriel, his throat working furiously as Nico finally gets his drink. Nico don't sip, he throws back. It's just what Yeriel was counting on. He jumps onto the precarious bottle.

YERIEL

(loudly) CO-KEE!

And then he kicks off - it's a herculean feat for a frog, and it's just enough to send the bottle tipping off the edge. Right onto the bottom of the upraised forty. Nico, his eyes closed in ecstasy, doesn't see it coming.

The heavy liquor bottle smashes into the bottom of the forty, cracking it and ramming it into Nico's mouth, breaking teeth and forcing his jaw open.

NICO

Mmmf! Mmm, aah!

Blood leaks from the corners of his mouth as he starts to drown in the malt liquor.

YERIEL

Co-Kee!

Sweet Cheeks rushes over.

SWEEK CHEEKS

I just called the cops and - WHAT THE FUCK?!

Nico turns towards the clerk, and she screams, running out of the shop.

YERIEL

(elatedly) Co-KEE!

The drowning man turns towards the sound, and Yeriel leaps, landing on the bottle stuck in the man's throat. Yeriel locks eyes with Nico.

YERIEL

(taunting) Co-Kee.

But this is no ordinary drunk. Nico's eyes narrow, and he grips the bottle in both hands, ripping it out of his mouth in a shower of broken teeth, glass, and blood. Yeriel leaps off and lands on one of the shelves.

NICO

Oh, you little fuck! Come here!

Nico lunges at Yeriel, but the frog is just able to evade him.

YERIEL

(panicked) Co-Kee!

This is new.

NICO

Get over here you slimy bastard!

Nico goes on a rampage, whipping his arms through the shelves, sending bottles of liquor flying and shattering everywhere. He shouts wordlessly as Yeriel's CO-KEE sounds during their battle. Yeriel leaps from shelf to shelf, and Nico knocks them over with abandon.

Finally, Nico grabs a bottle of rum and hurls it at the frog, and catches him in mid-air, sending him flying and crashing to the ground. That hurt.

YERIEL

(weakly) Co-Kee.

NICO

Yeah! Got you! Now, come to papa!

He lurches forward, stumbling in the debris. Yeriel notices flashing lights outside the door and starts hopping towards them. He's doing his best, but as he gets closer, they don't open. Yeriel is too light to set off the sensor. Undaunted, Yeriel turns to face his destiny.

YERIEL

(defiantly) Co-Kee.

Nico sees his prey, and speeds up. He rushes forward, his feet landing on the sensor pad. He hefts the heavy bottle up -

SWEET CHEEKS
(offscreen) He's got a gun!

Nico is ripped apart by gunfire. He stumbles backwards, the heavy bottle falling from his hand as he falls, an astonished look on his face.

OFFICER
Move, move! Check him!

A stampede of officer's rush in - they'd arrived sooner than expected. Yeriel hops off, a little erratically from his battle, but alive. In the distance, he sees the lights from the ambulance. We zoom in to see the lights reflected in his eyes, and he hops towards them.

10. INT. DELGADO LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Paramedics rush into the Delgado's living room. Mr. and Mrs. Delgado cling to one another, looks of disbelief on their faces. There's a police officer in the back, speaking on the phone as he waves in the Shaken Paramedic.

SHAKEN PARAMEDIC
I'm so sorry. We would have been here sooner, but there was an accident. Where's your son?

Wordlessly, Mrs. Delgado points down the hall. The Shaken Paramedic nods at them and heads in. As he does, a small shape hops out of the medic bag he carries, unnoticed by the others in the home. Yeriel hops under the nearby couch, before turning and staring out.

In his eyes, we see the reflection of Mr. Delgado.

MR. DELGADO
(voiceover, remembering) I'm making frog legs!

A toneless crescendo grows as we zoom in on Mr. Delgado's reflection in Yeriel's eye.

FADE OUT:

YERIEL
Co-Kee.