

# THE BLACK UMBRELLA

FADE IN:

EXT. CONSTANTA, ROMANIA - DUSK

The sun sets over the Black Sea as the chilling cry of the muezzin (Islamic caller to prayer) rises.

EXT. MIHAIL KOGALNICEANU AIRPORT, ROMANIA - DUSK

Some thirty kilometers inland, a HOODED MAN collapses as KIDNAPPERS haul him from the back of a black van.

Brake lights betray the dead-of-winter darkness revealing a row of blanketed body bags beside an abandoned boarding house.

Dragging the man by both arms, they disappear into the building.

FADE MUEZZIN UP

BLACKOUT.

INT. CELL - NIGHT

With a JOLT on the hatchway to a solitary cell, SNAKES OF LIGHT surround the once hooded soul now shivering in the corner.

His beastie eyes find the boots of two figures in fatigues, batons in hand.

Beat.

HALLWAY MONTAGE:

- 1) They drag him from his cell.
- 2) Past rabid dogs ready to pounce on a PROSTRATE PRISONER.
- 3) A MAN hanging headfirst from a platform, his back blistered and burned.
- 4) A ransacked room in which a WOMAN wildly resists rape by an OVERGROWN GUARD.
- 5) They arrive in a dank, dimly lit chamber appropriately demarcated, "D U N G E O N."

END HALLWAY MONTAGE.

INT. CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

A small, makeshift machine sits atop a metallic table next to which sit two chairs and a digital camera on a tripod.

They cuff the man to the nearest chair and return the hood over his head, securing it with masking tape.

Beat.

They force the chair on its back and hold a bucket of water over his head.

The camera records in night vision as the hooded man attempts to dodge the downpour.

Between bouts of desperation they allow him to recover, only to continue drowning him again.

The ritualistic cry of the muezzin returns.

One guard urinates over his body while the other empties the bucket.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - NIGHT

An eerily full moon hides behind chiaroscuro clouds.

INT. CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

The hooded man fights to break free as they prop the chair back on its feet.

CLOSE UP

Tarif clenches his fist as a guard attempts to remove his wedding band.

A baton comes BEATING down on the hooded man's hand, causing his fist to convulse uncontrollably.

The guard winds up for another when-

An INTERROGATOR enters the room.

Beat.

The defeated guard wraps his baton around the hooded man's jugular while the other proceeds to attach electrical probes to his fingers, toes, and genitals.

The interrogator takes a seat.

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CONTINUED:

Beat.

A test of the system on its lowest setting leaves the hooded man twitching.

A surge of electricity SHOOTs through his spine, sending his chair back to the floor. The bolt BLOWS the main power-breaker, turning the entire building pitch black.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - NIGHT

Wayward winds shake the canopies of surrounding trees.

INT. CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

A generator restores the dungeon's dim lights.

As the hooded man struggles to recover, the guards remove the probes, attach a thick chain around his neck, and cuff his hands behind his back.

The interrogator stands, lights a cigarette, and paces about as one guard grabs the camera.

Beat.

Now hovering over him, the interrogator drops his cigarette on the man's back and WATCHES IT BURN while the guard holds him down with his boot.

The hooded man rolls with rage until they kick him unconscious.

The cameraman moves in for a close-up as the others SLAP a condom on a baton.

They reposition the hooded man's posterior and penetrate his anus with an unsettling alacrity.

The cry of the muezzin reaches a quivering crescendo.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - NIGHT

The wind sends ripples through a shallow puddle made of melted snow.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

They remove the hood from the man's head and drag him back to his cell--his khaki-colored skin collects more cuts along the way.

EXT. ROMANIA - DAWN

The sun rises over the Black Sea as the muezzin repeats his cry.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - DAWN - ESTABLISHING

Snow completely camouflages the boarding house.

INT. CELL

Pitch black.

As a guard wrestles with the hatch to the hooded man's hole, the stench of day-old defecation and rotting corpses startles a young PENCIL PUSHER holding a manila file.

ANGLE ON

The hooded man, lying in his own blood and feces.

CLOSE UP

Inside the manila file, a photo of the man on the floor.

INSERT

**NAME:** TARIF HUSSEIN HADI **DOB:** 09.21.61 **NATIONALITY:** GERMAN  
**ETHNICITY:** ARAB **RENDER:** SUSPECTED AL-QA'IDA **REVIEW:**  
ERRONEOUSLY RENDERED.

EXTREME CLOSE UP

Tarif's haunting eyes.

EXT. WASHINGTON, D.C. - SUPREME COURT - DAY - ESTABLISHING

The sun radiates off the Supreme Court steps.

INT. SUPREME COURT - MAIN CORRIDOR - MORNING

Tarif sits staring into the creamy, Alabama marble columns of the Supreme Court's "Great Hall." A team of lawyers quietly confers near grand oak doors that rise to a coffered ceiling.

A low, rhythmic drumming stirs throughout.

INT. SUPREME COURT - CHAMBER - NOON

Standing in the court's chamber, Tarif studies his surroundings: a dignified mix of mahogany and marble.

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CONTINUED:

Behind him, a bronze rail divides red and black benches. In front of him sit the desks of the Court Marshal and Clerk of the Court, framing the raised bench behind which the Justices sit.

TARIF'S POV

Admiring the Justices' black robes as they enter the courtroom.

Beat.

The Marshal motions for everyone to take their seats.

EXT. SUPREME COURT - AFTERNOON

Ominous black clouds roll over the Supreme Court.

INT. CHAMBER - EVENING

ANGLE ON

Tarif, listening attentively to deliberations.

TARIF'S POV

Eyeing Defense Council.

EXT. SUPREME COURT - LATER

SFX

The clouds slowly overtake the open sky.

INT. CHAMBER - LATER

Tarif remains seated while all around him rise.

CLOSE UP

Tarif, agitated and unscrewed as --

TARIF'S POV

The Justices retire. Defense Council shake hands and exit with unsympathetic smiles.

FADE DRUMMING UP

INT. MAIN CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Tarif and his attorneys trek past the corridor's towering columns. Thunder REVERBERATES through the thick walls.

At the end of the corridor, across from the elevators, is a cluster of muted television monitors broadcasting various news channels.

INSERT CAPTIONS (FROM REAL PRESS CONFERENCE)

"...Court upholds Administration's claims...'national security.'"

They enter the elevator.

"...In what court can he seek justice?"

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE UP

Tarif's embittered glare.

Tarif's head lowers as he disappears behind the elevator's golden doors.

BLACKOUT.

EXT. HOTEL - NIGHT

Storming rain.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - NIGHT

CLOSE UP

A "Do Not Disturb" sign hangs from the handle of a hotel door.

INT. TARIF'S HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Newspapers cover the otherwise clean carpet.

INSERT HEADLINES

"CIA black sites," "Black sites," "The 'Black Umbrella.'"

Small, empty, alcohol bottles surround a black laptop.

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