

DRIP

Written by

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Based on the life of Queen Elizabeth Bathory

INT. BATHROOM - 1950 - PRESENT

Elegant. Peaceful. LIZ (49, frail, pregnant) admires herself in a mirror. Behind her, a pristine, white claw-footed tub stands.

Liz undoes her silk robe, running her hands over her body, letting them rest on her stomach.

She turns to face the tub. Struggling to get over the edge, she steps in, sinking down into the clear water.

The water splashes over the edge as Liz settles in. She listens to a quiet DRIP of water trickling over the edge. She glances out the window at an elegant garden, slowly beginning to relax.

EXT. GARDEN - 1922 - NIGHT

GERALD (35, handsome) walks next to LIZ (now 21) in their best clothes on a beautifully kept lawn. LAUGHTER and CHATTER fills the garden from the conversations of the many richly dressed couples around them.

Gerald and Liz stop at the edge of a porch as the MUSIC comes to an end. A larger, older GENTLEMAN (48, confident) chuckles on the porch as the conversations cease.

GENTLEMAN

Thank you, ladies and gents, for your attendance tonight. First I'd like to thank our sponsor Dick Lawrence - who I happened to find out is quite the Oliver Twist tonight!

Scattered LAUGHTER and APPLAUSE fill the garden before the sound starts to fade as Liz focuses on Gerald.

GERALD

Liz, doll, no matter what happens tonight it'll all work out.

LIZ

I'm the one that's supposed to be comforting you.

GERALD

Hey, I'm up against old-man Jacobs, I've got nothing to worry about.

The Gentleman's VOICE comes back in.

GENTLEMAN

And now ladies and gentlemen, I'd
like to welcome the restaurant's
new general manager--

Gerald takes Liz's hand in his. There's a modest engagement
ring on her ring finger.

GENTLEMAN (CONT'D)

Gerald Franklin!

Applause erupts as Gerald picks Liz up with a hug.

He kisses her on the cheek before heading up the porch steps
to shake the Gentleman's hand.

Liz beams from the side of the porch before hurrying to
congratulate Gerald as he and the gentleman leave the stage.
She grabs his arm.

LIZ

I'm so proud of you.

Gerald faces her with a glowing smile. The gentleman tugs at
him to follow.

GERALD

I have to talk to the sponsor,
doll, I'll see you in a bit.
(moves into the crowd)
This is it! Things are looking up
Mrs. Franklin!

Liz chuckles as she watches Gerald pulled into the crowd.

INT. BATHROOM - 1950 - DAY

Liz (49) smiles slightly, then scrunches her face, taking
deep breathes. In through her nose, out through her mouth.
She grabs her stomach, letting out a small whimper of pain.

INT. LIVINGROOM - 1928 - DAY

Liz (now 27) pushes a strand of hair behind her ear. She sits
in a tea-room with LUCY (26, beautiful) and FRANCINE (28,
visibly pregnant) and several other well-dressed women. A
butler in a tailored suit pours more tea.

LUCY

Donnie and I have simply waited for the news to be confirmed by the doctor for ages - and now that it's here--

FRANCINE

It was the same for Ben and I, but I'll tell you, you simply just can't believe it until you start to show--

LUCY

I do believe I'll start showing in just a few weeks, I can already feel my clothes getting tighter--

FRANCINE

Ah, remind me this evening I have a lovely seamstress I can recommend--

LUCY

Oh that'd be grand, thanks. But what about you Liz? How long have you and Gerald been trying?

Liz shifts her weight uncomfortably, but plasters a smile across her face.

LIZ

Only a year, or so - of course Gerald will be ecstatic when we get the news, but for now we're simply taking our time--

FRANCINE

Oh, if I could go back to that time...

Francine and Lucy laugh. Now anxious, Liz reaches out for a cigarette. She lights it and takes a long inhale. Francine and Lucy's laughter grows louder as Liz turns to realize they're both staring at her.

LUCY

I didn't know you started smoking--

FRANCINE

Clearly she's only just begun! look at her she can't even do that properly--

Liz takes the cigarette out of her mouth, embarrassed.

FRANCINE (CONT'D)
 Next time use a pipe, dear - we're
 not heathens.

Liz fumbles to quickly put the cigarette out in a crystal ash tray.

INT. BATHROOM - 1950 - PRESENT

A single cigarette butt sits in a similar, more extravagant crystal ash-tray on the bathroom counter. Liz (49) groans as she pulls her knees into her chest. She exhales heavily, letting her head fall between her legs.

INT. KITCHEN - 1934 - EVENING

Liz (now 33) picks her head up off her folded elbows, leaning off the kitchen table into her chair as a DOOR OPENS and shuts with a SLAM.

GERALD (O.S.)
 Honey?

Liz sits up a little straighter, smoothing out her apron.

Gerald (now 48) enters, then sets a brown package on the counter. As he does, the corner begins to leak, letting a few drops of dark, red blood seep out.

GERALD (CONT'D)
 Smells good in here honey - what'd
 you make?

LIZ
 (distracted)
 Casserole, Lucy gave me the recipe.

The steady DRIP of blood from the package is louder now, the SOUNDS of the world around Liz beginning to become muffled.

GERALD
 An amazing day today honey, looks
 like we're gonna have enough--

Liz can't stop staring at the blood falling from the package.

DRIP. DRIP. DRIP.

GERALD (CONT'D)
 Liz? Liz? LIZ!

Liz blinks and looks up at Gerald. He watches her, his brow furrowed in concern. He turns to see what she's staring at.

GERALD (CONT'D)
Steaks...?

She's confused. He grabs the package and holds it up.

GERALD (CONT'D)
Leftover steaks from the restaurant
- I thought they'd be a nice treat.

He drops the package onto the counter. It violently spatters blood everywhere.

GERALD (CONT'D)
We've gotta keep you well-fed after
all--

LIZ
I lost the baby.

Gerald stares at her. He doesn't take his eyes off her, as he slowly moves over to crouch beside her.

She continues to stare at the blood from the package, pooling on the counter, dripping onto the floor again.

GERALD
Sweetie...

LIZ
It's fine. We'll just keep trying.

GERALD
Honey, don't you think maybe we
should just--

LIZ
It's what we both want.

He pauses, choosing his words carefully to not upset her.

GERALD
It's what everyone else has, but
I'd be happy just me and you--

LIZ
It's what we deserve.

GERALD
We could travel - see the world--

Gerald slowly reaches for her hand.

Suddenly the PHONE RINGS and they both jump.

GERALD (CONT'D)
I'll get it, you just--

LIZ
Just get your bloody shit out of
the kitchen.

She shoves past him to pick up the phone.

LIZ (CONT'D)
Hello? Yes, hi Lucy.

Gerald moves to pick up the package. He looks at Liz, concerned. Liz's voice breaks as she hurriedly shoves tears from her eyes.

LIZ (CONT'D)
Congratulations!
(to Gerald)
Lucy and Donnie had another girl.

INT. BATHROOM - 1950 - PRESENT

A phone dangles on a cord hanging precariously off the edge of a dresser in the bathroom. Liz (49) watches it sway gently, her breathing more ragged now.

She lets out a YELL of pain, bringing her head up to search for something in the room, her eyes coming to rest on a photo of:

INT. DININGROOM - 1942 - NIGHT

Liz (now 41) and Gerald (now 56) sit next to each other at a long, elegant dinner table surrounded by new friends. Chatter fills the room. Liz lights a cigarette in a long cigarette pipe and begins to take puffs of it, chatting with Teresa (36) and Meg (35).

LIZ
So what do you think of the town?

MEG
James was so excited to join the
restaurant--

TERESA

It's so lovely, but we were so sorry to hear about what happened - you didn't know any of the women did you?

LIZ

I was friends with Lucy and Francine, but the others I'd only met in passing I believe.

She takes a long inhale from her cigarette as silence falls over the three of them.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Oh, goodness, I'm being so rude - can I get either of you a light?

MEG

No thanks, in fact that reminds me...

Meg stands, clinking the edge of her glass. The conversations slowly stop as all eyes fall on her.

MEG (CONT'D)

Thank you Liz and Gerald for inviting us to this lovely night. On this wonderful occasion I have some news I'd really like to share -
- James, could you come here?

James (38) stands and moves to join Meg. The phone suddenly rings.

GERALD

Sorry about that Meg - I'll grab that, you just continue.

MEG

Well, James, I just, wanted to say that I met with the doctor today and--

James suddenly screams and wraps Meg in his arms, spinning her around. She laughs.

With tears in his eyes he kisses Meg before turning to the room.

JAMES

We're having a baby!

The room erupts in celebration, but Liz shatters the glass in her hand. She quickly moves to clean up the shards before anyone can notice, but the commotion dies down as Gerald suddenly enters the room and passes James his coat.

GERALD

So sorry everyone but we've got a shipping emergency at the restaurant! Feel free to stay as long as you need and happy new year!

The rest of the chatter begins to die down. James gives Meg one last kiss before hurrying out.

TERESA

Ron and I best be leaving too.

They follow Gerald and James out the door, as do the other few couples in the room, leaving Meg and Liz alone.

Meg, all smiles, grabs her shawl and starts to head out when she notices Liz's bloody hand.

MEG

Oh you poor thing! Let me help with that.

LIZ

I'm fine, really.

Disregarding this, Meg hurries to examine her hand.

Liz, however, can't help but focus on the blood running down her palm, dripping onto the floor.

MEG

I've got just the thing.

Meg pulls a bit of bandage out of her bag, as Liz still stares at the blood, clenching her other fist.

Liz lets out a dry chuckle.

LIZ

So prepared, aren't you?

MEG

You never know when you're gonna need it. And I think my motherly instincts are already beginning to kick in...

LIZ
Are they now?

Liz messes with the other shards of glass on the table as Meg bandages her hand.

MEG
Yeah, I mean you just never know if you'll be prepared, but for me I've always felt like I was ready.

Liz breath catches in her chest. She wraps a fist around a shard.

LIZ
Just...born ready, huh?

Meg chuckles.

MEG
Maybe.

Liz's other hand begins to bleed, unnoticed by Meg, as she clenches the shard even tighter.

MEG (CONT'D)
I've just always wanted it I guess...I'm not sure, just always felt like...

Liz looks at Meg, anger behind her smiling facade.

LIZ
Like you deserved it?

MEG
Well yes, I suppose so--

She suddenly stops with a choked breath. She chokes again. And again.

Blood begins to stain Meg's dress as her grip loosens on the bandage. Her eyes gloss as her body collapses on the floor. Liz stares coldly at her, the shard of glass covered in blood.

LIZ
How. Fucking. Dare. You.

She crouches down on the ground and stabs the glass shard into Meg's stomach.

Blood spills all over the floor as Liz cuts open Meg's stomach. She drops the shard on her carpet, sticking her injured hands into Meg's stomach with a SQUELCH.

She pulls out a bloody fetus, no larger than an avocado.

She stands, turning to face a mirror on the dining room wall. Tears fill her eyes as she cradles the bloody, unformed baby, an unmistakable look of love on her face.

INT. BATHROOM - 1950 - DAY

Liz sobs now as she screams in the tub. Her hands in fists grip the sides of the tubs. She flails in the water, tensing her entire body as she begins to push.

INT. BEDROOM - 1950 - EARLIER

Liz (49) enters the bedroom and slowly climbs into bed next to Gerald (64) who lies on the bed with a news paper. He looks up as he notices Liz's humming.

GERALD
Someone's excited.

LIZ
Well, it's any day now.

Liz continues humming as Gerald furrows his brow. He sets the newspaper down on his bedside table.

GERALD
Liz?

She looks at Gerald with a smile that turns into a frown as she notices Gerald's worried look.

LIZ
Are you alright?

GERALD
A bab...

He runs a hand through his graying hair.

GERALD (CONT'D)
Liz I-I just-- Liz we can't have a baby. I mean-- who's gonna take care of when I... and how the hell did this even happen-- the doctor said you couldn't--

LIZ

I found a way. I knew it was what we wanted--

GERALD

No this is what you wanted. I mean Jesus Liz all I've ever wanted was you - I didn't need the job, the house, the baby but you always wanted it and now--

LIZ

This is what we needed. This is what we deserved - don't you remember promising me that?

GERALD

I've always tried to--

LIZ

Do you know how hard I worked for this to happen? And now you're talking about how you don't even want it--

GERALD

What the hell are you talking about--
-

LIZ

Lucy, Francine, your office secretary, the barista, the waitress, Meg - they all had what I couldn't fucking get - WHAT I FUCKING DESERVED.

GERALD

THIS IS WHAT I WAS TALKING ABOUT. You're going crazy trying to achieve a dream we're not meant to have.

LIZ

Don't you dare--

GERALD

NO, LIZ, LISTEN THIS ISN'T FOR US--

LIZ

SHUT UP!

GERALD

I WISH WE'D HAD THE ABORTION.

Liz grabs the lamp off the bedside table and strikes Gerald with it, smashing his skull in. Blood splatters the carpet.

INT. BATHROOM - 1950 - PRESENT

Liz sits back, letting her shoulders rest against the tub. She is pale and weak, shaking with every movement.

In her arms, a small, bloody baby wails.

A smile on her face, she lets her head fall back against the tub, her eyes glossing over.

The water turns red as blood fills the tub.

Liz's whole body relaxes as she lets out a final breath.

The frail baby in her arms wiggles and falls into the water with a splash.

Bubbles drift to the surface for a moment, before suddenly the water falls still.

THE END.