

THE TSAR'S CHOICE

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Based on documentaries

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COLD OPEN

FADE IN:

INT. SATAN'S HQ - NIGHT

Satan, in the military uniform and crossed arms on his chest, stands in front of a huge holographic screen.

ANGLE ON SCREEN:

In the black deep space, cosmic ships battle each other, spewing deadly fire beams.

BACK TO SCENE

Two loyal servants Demon and Spy stand behind His Majesty. As always, to meet Him, they donned expensive name badges with an inverted pentagram.

SATAN

The war! The war of Mortals! What
could be more enjoyable to watch
one flesh destroy the other!

He speaks pompously, slightly turned to his servants, and a smug smile appears on his handsome face.

SATAN (CONT'D)

(increasing his voice)
And the larger the scale, the
better!

The coldness and inhumanity in his voice make the Spy flinch. He bows hastily.

Demon stretches at attention like a soldier in front of a general. The heels of his boots ARE HEARD clicking together.

Satan touches the screen and it goes blank.

MOMENT LATER

His Majesty freezes, looking at an invisible point.

Spy COUGHS slightly. A semblance of a smile appears on his face and he bows even lower. Satan turns his head to him.

SATAN (CONT'D)

Speak!

In a commanding voice, he addresses his servant.

SPY
Your Majesty... Lights are making a
replica of the Earth...

He speaks carefully.

SATAN
A replica?

He thinks.

SATAN (CONT'D)
With souls?

SPY
Yes, Your Majesty.

Spy nods.

SATAN
Where is a starting point?

SPY
They keep it top secret, Your
Majesty.

He bows as low as possible.

SATAN
(to himself)
Lights hate war as much as I adore
it... They are in the preparation
of a nasty surprise for me...

Satan narrows his eyes.

SATAN (CONT'D)
(to Spy)
Dig out more info by any means!

He commands imperiously.

SPY
I obey, Your Majesty.

SATAN
(to Demon)
And you - stay alert!

Demon raises his right hand touching his forehead with
fingers.

THE END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

EXT. APPLE GARDEN - HEAVEN

SUBTITLES IN: HEAVEN

Paradise-looking garden. Gorgeous apple trees in the background.

On a large meadow covered with green grass and flowers, Ann watches, as WU (14) teaches MIRA (12) to fly using white wings.

WU(shouts to Mira)
Left wing!

Mira makes awkward movements in the air.

WU
Sorry, the right one! The right wing!

Mira tries to correct the mistake. Ann glancing at Mira turns to Wu.

ANN
You're upset about something, Wu?

WU
Yes.

He frowns.

ANN
What? What is it?

WU
I got bad news from Meketaten.

He frowns.

ANN
Which news?

WU
They want to marry her.

He sighs sadly.

ANN
Who? Who they? Akhenaten?

WU
I'm not sure... She said it's politics.

ANN
But she is still a young girl...

WU
Yes, it is, but it's Egypt and she will be twelve soon.

Mira is slowly descending.

ANN
(to Wu)
Let's talk later.

Wu nods. They both run towards landing Mira.

MOMENT LATER

Ann and Wu help Mira to take off white wings.

ANN (CONT'D)
(to Mira)
Well done!

MIRA
Are you kidding, mom?

ANN
Well, I'm even worse with that.

MIRA
I want them to move by the force of my will, you know...

She nods to wings.

ANN
Hm...

MIRA
But they don't want to...

WU
Mira, you have to use your muscles, not your mind!

ANN
Wu is right, the wings are not your own body, which means they are independent of your mind's will.

MIRA

Oh, it's so difficult!
Teleportation is so much easier.
(beat)
Daddy!

Ann and Wu turn their heads - Michael with his massive wings and a golden halo approaches them from above.

MOMENT LATER

With a broad smile, the archangel smoothly lands in front of three.

MICHAEL

Hello dearest!

He kisses Ann on the forehead, gently ruffles the hair on Wu's head, and hugs Mira.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

(to Mira)
Let me help you.

He takes Mira's wings and makes a movement with his fingers. The wings decrease until the size of a palm. Another slight movement and Michael materializes a beautiful golden chain from the thin air.

MOMENT LATER

Mira with her small wings on her neck happily smiles.

MIRA

Thank you, daddy. Tell me one thing
- how did you learn to use your
wings?

MICHAEL

Well, I was just born with them.

He smiles broadly.

MIRA

But seriously?

Michael turns to her and looks into her eyes intently.

MICHAEL

But seriously - he who tries always
succeeds!
(beat)
Have you got my point?

MIRA

I got it.

She nods.

MICHAEL

(to all)

Now, guys, I want to show you
something spectacular!

With a broad smile, he spreads his massive wings over them,
and all four DISSOLVE into thin air.

EXT. COLISEUM-LIKE AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

They materialize at the top of a huge auditorium.

There are hundreds or even thousands of humanoids in it
working on computer-like screens.

In the middle of the auditorium, a holographic image of the
Earth hangs above the stage's base.

The planet slowly rotates around its axis like a huge living
being surrounded by air flows and looking at the outside
world by its eyes-oceans.

Michael puts a finger to his lips.

MICHAEL

(telepathically)

Keep quiet! You are present in the
replication of the Earth.

All nod (the further discussions during this visit are kept
telepathically).

MIRA

(to Wu)

The Earth, the planet?

Wu nods.

MIRA (CONT'D)

Where you were born?

WU

Yes.

He nods proudly.

MOMENT LATER

A melodic sound runs through the auditorium.

MICHAEL
Attention!

A COPY OF THE EARTH is slowly separating from the mother planet.

1914 appears above the replica and floats after it.

ANN
(to Michael)
Wow! And these numbers - is it a version?

MICHAEL
No. It's the year. It's a parallel Earth with a time lag to your native planet.

ANN
And what is this for?

MICHAEL
You mean the project?

He glances at her. Ann nods.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Everything is for the experiment.

He smiles at her.

ANN
Hm! So many resources are involved in this experiment.

MICHAEL
Yes, it is.

He says as obvious.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
These guys are from Heaven, and at least as many are brought in from our subcontractor, the Material System.

ANN
Are you kidding?

MICHAEL
Nope.

He shakes his head.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

They have to copy and paste every smallest materialistic detail on the replicant and we have to integrate a soul in every human, animal, plant, or mineral.

ANN

Huh! And, probably, in addition, six shells of the Earth with their own worlds.

MICHAEL

That's right!

He looks at her approvingly.

WU

Can I work on such kinds of projects in the future?

MICHAEL

Sure.

(to Mira)

And you, Mira, would you like to?

MIRA

That's nice, but I dream about far galaxies.

MICHAEL

Everything is in your own hands, dear.

He gently strokes her head. Mira smiles.

MOMENT LATER

Two identical images of the Earth are slowly rotating above the stage.

Wu CLAPS his hands. Following him, all others applaud the newborn planet.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Want to take a look at the people and lifestyle on the new planet?

All at once: "Yes!"

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Which country or place?

ANN
Russia, Petersburg!

MICHAEL
Great.

WU
Egypt, Memphis!

MICHAEL
(to Wu)
Memphis in the 20th century is a
dead city, but you can observe the
ruins.

He turns to Mira.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Mira?

MIRA
Anything goes.

MICHAEL
Okay. Let's start with Russia
first.

WU
(to Mira)
It's the homeland of our grandpa
and grandma.

Mira nods.

Michael touches the air in front of him - a bubble screen
forms.

MOMENT LATER

Aiming the screen at the Earth-replica, Michael waits for the
planet to turn towards him as the European continent.

MICHAEL
Here we are!

He taps on the screen and zooms in on the chosen point.

ON-SCREEN:

EXT. NEVA RIVER - ST. PETERSBURG - THE YEAR 1914 - DAY

Ladies and gentlemen, as well as children, walk along the
embankment of the ice-covered Neva River.

Someone is skating on the river, and someone is skiing.

A tram and horse-drawn carts.

OFF-SCREEN

All four explore the bustling city life with great interest.

WU

Wow! I have never seen such a grey
sky in my entire life!

Ann smiles.

WU (CONT'D)

(to Mira)
Look at this!

He shows at the moving tram.

MIRA

How funny!

She nods.

MIRA (CONT'D)

And so many clothes they carry on!

MICHAEL

They have seasons, and now it is
winter, the low sun hides behind
clouds and does not give warmth,
therefore people need clothes to
keep warm.

MIRA

Interesting... Look! Such heavy
structures of the buildings! But
some of the elements are beautiful.

MICHAEL

This city was built by the best
artists of their time.

(to Ann)

How do you like it, dear?

ANN

Well, definitely exciting. But this
time period is far before my
parents were born.

MICHAEL

Of course, but still, it's their
native city.

(MORE)

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

(beat)

I want to talk with you, my dear.

Ann nods.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

(to Wu and Mira)

Do you know how it works?

He nods on the device.

WU

Sure.

MIRA

Yes.

MICHAEL

You can also check out Egypt. But
mom and I have some business to do.

Kids nod in agreement.

Michael, gently taken Ann's hand touches the translucent wall, which absorbs them both in it.

INT. CATHEDRAL-LIKE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Michael and Ann sit opposite each other on clouds-like chairs. Above them hang graceful crystal structures, casting highlights on their faces.

MICHAEL

How are you, my dear?

He gently takes her hand.

ANN

I am good.

She smiles but immediately frowns.

ANN (CONT'D)

But Wu is very sad because
Meketaten has to get married.

MICHAEL

I know.

He sits down next to her. His cloud chair merges with hers to form a bench.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

And I have a plan.

He smiles.

ANN

Really?

She asks with hope and snuggles up to him. The bench transforms into a swing.

Michael slightly taps on the air and the space around them is filled with fantastic flowers of all colors and shapes.

MICHAEL

Yeap.

He kicks off the invisible floor, swinging their swing. A beautiful pond can be seen not far away with two snow-white swans.

ANN

Do you think it's Akhenaten's idea?

MICHAEL

No. Not really.

ANN

But if Pharaoh in Egypt is a God, who else can push his daughter to do what she doesn't want?

MICHAEL

The traditions and beliefs.

He looks at her expressively.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Akhenaten made the Egyptian priests and the military unemployed. So, they lost their income and power...

Ann nods.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Now they are all so annoyed that even the slightest step of Akhenaten to the side can lead to revolt. So, he can't risk it.

ANN

Okay, but what is your plan?

MICHAEL

We shall take her here.

He says it simply as a matter of course.

ANN
 Ascension?
 (beat)
 Like me?

MICHAEL
 No, the physical body must stay on
 Earth.

ANN
 The death?

She asks carefully.

MICHAEL
 We will transfer her consciousness
 into a replica of her body here, in
 Heaven, during her sleep... of
 course, only with her consent.

ANN
 Sounds great, but what about
 Akhenaten and Nefertiti, are you
 going to talk with them or...?

MICHAEL
 We shall give them a sign, but no
 long discussions.

He broadly smiles and brings her palm to his cheek.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
 Anything else to make you happy?

Rose petals slowly fall on them from above.

Ann sighs.

ANN
 Well... you know, I like
 theoretical training here, but my
 personal motto is to learn from my
 own hands-on experience.

MICHAEL
 Very good motto, indeed. So, a new
 practical project wanted?

ANN
 Yes, please.

She folds her palms over her chest.

MICHAEL

We are currently looking for a volunteer for the copy of the Earth you saw.

ANN

Okay. Tell me more!

She revives.

MICHAEL

We want to give Russia a second chance - to choose the path to Light, not Darkness, which happened on your planet.

Rose petals slowly but steadily give way to snowflakes falling on Michael and Ann.

ANN

Right.

She catches one of the snowflakes and examines the delicate pattern.

MICHAEL

We recognized that the guy we sent there needs support, so we want to appoint one more missionary.

ANN

Right. Are who is that guy?

MICHAEL

Grigory Rasputin.

ANN

Who? Wait a sec... Is this the devil monk who destroyed the Russian monarchy?

Michael broadly smiles.

MICHAEL

He is our guy. Last time we underestimated his enemies, so now we want to give him an extra hand.

Ann thinks.

ANN

(slowly)

What kind of enemies?

MICHAEL
Arrogant and envious people from
all walks of life.

Ann nods.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
You know, he was a peasant who made
friends with the royal family.

He kicks off the invisible floor, swinging their swing.

ANN
And... how will my mission
practically work? I'll have to do
some training, like... Helen did?

She looks at him as if checking whether he remembers one of
her past lives.

MICHAEL
No, not like Helen.

He shakes his head.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
This time you will receive a
program that will guide you
subconsciously.

He looks closely at her.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
In addition, you will gain the
language and other skills you will
need there.

A beautiful pond with two swans is covered with ice. Snow-
white swans turn into crystal swans circling on smooth ice.

Ann looks at Michael.

ANNS
Will I remember who am I?

MICHAEL
No. Your current memory will be
locked, instead, the past
supporting the project will be
embedded.

Ann nods.

ANN
And for how long?

MICHAEL
The time frame is not fixed, but I think not more than a year.

ANN
Ouch! Year? I thought for a day or two.

MICHAEL
Maximum a year. And this is an earthly year... And here, as you know, there is no time - so you will return approximately to the starting point.

ANN
Huh!

She exhales.

ANN (CONT'D)
And... if something happens?

MICHAEL
We'll have a replica of your physical body, just in the case.

He strokes her hand.

ANN
And... what do you think? Is this something that you want me to do?

MICHAEL
Your background fits the job very well. And I will be around when it's needed.

The ice around the crystal swans collapses, freeing the living birds. They flap their snow-white wings with pleasure.

Ann shakes herself.

ANN
I'll take the project!

She declares emphatically.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. MAISON DE TOLÉRANCE - DAY

SUBTITLES IN: ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA - THE YEAR 1914

NADEZHDA (Ann), 24, in an inexpensive winter coat and fur hat, approaches a two-story house. She holds a travel bag in one hand and a newspaper in the other.

She checks the house number with the one in the newspaper and straightens her coat.

THEN: She takes a deep breath and goes to the door, pulling on the bell cord.

The BELL SOUNDS.

MOMENT LATER

Hurried footsteps ARE HEARD.

The door is opened by FROSYA, 17, wearing a white apron and a dark dress.

NADEZHDA

I am on the ad.

She lifts the newspaper. Frosya giving a glance into Nadezhda's face, nods.

FROSYA

Wait here. I'll ask madam.

She turns and goes, leaving the door ajar.

Nadezhda peers inside - a red carpet, a statue of a naked woman, and a large chandelier on the ceiling. She sighs.

HEARD Frosya's quick steps.

FROSYA (CONT'D)

Come in.

INT. VESTIBULE - CONTINUOUS

Following Frosya Nadezhda passes by a stuffed brown bear with bared teeth and a dance hall with a gorgeous grand piano.

EXT. MADAM'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Frosya gently KNOCKS on the slightly open door.

INT. MADAM'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

MADAME KLEIN, a big German woman in her late 40s, with sloppy tinted eyebrows sits at a wooden desk.

Nadezhda crouches down.

MADAME KLEIN

Well?

She asks defiantly.

NADEZHDA

I'm on the ad.

She comes closer and puts the newspaper on the edge of the desk. Madan doesn't stir but examines Kenya's provincial dress code.

MADAME KLEIN

(with a German accent)

Where are you from?

NADEZHDA

From the Pskov province.

She replies meekly.

MADAME KLEIN

And what's brought you... hm...
here?

NADEZHDA

Well...

She begins without lifting her eyes.

NADEZHDA (CONT'D)

Well, my mother died... and my
father lost our estate. I was left
without funds...

She stops. Madame's features soften a bit.

MADAME KLEIN

Why not a governess?

NADEZHDA

I was, but the master... He began
to pester me, the lady of the house
found out and... fired...

On the last word, Nadezhda's lips turn down, her voice
trembles.

Madam changes position in her chair and COUGHS.

MADAME KLEIN

How old?

NADEZHDA

Twenty-four.

Madame slightly wrinkles her nose.

MADAME KLEIN

(do you speak French?)
Parles-tu français?

She asks in French.

NADEZHDA

(Yes, madame)
Oui, madame.

She crouches down.

MADAME KLEIN

(softer)
Any other language?

NADEZHDA

English. And German a bit.

MADAME KLEIN

(Good, in German)
Gut.

She's getting kinder.

MADAME KLEIN (CONT'D)

Have you worked in a place like
this?

She looks sternly at the girl.

NADEZHDA

No, madam.

Madam wrinkles up; thinks.

MADAME KLEIN
Do you play the piano?

NADEZHDA
Yes, I do, madam.

MADAME KLEIN
How well?

NADEZHDA
Quite passable. Also on guitar and
clarinet.

Madame softens.

MADAME KLEIN
Our pianist is ill, replace him and
take a look around. Frosya will
arrange a place to sleep and food
for you.

NADEZHDA
Thank you, madame.

Nadezhda crouches down.

DISSOLVED TO:

INT. DANCE HALL - NIGHT

A spacious room with parquet floors, decorated with mirrors
in gilded frames, graceful chairs, and crystal chandeliers.

A couple of dozen young women are dressed either in open ball
gowns or in masquerade costumes of hussars, pages,
fisherwomen, or schoolgirls. They chat with each other,
chewing something or smoking.

Nadezhda in an open elegant dress sits at the piano.
Violinist Borya, 40s, leans towards her.

BORYA
Want?

He holds out an unfinished bottle of lemonade.

NADEZHDA
No, thanks.

She smiles slightly and shakes her head, concentrating on the
notes.

ANGLE ON NADEZHDA'S HANDS: Her gentle hands shake. She rubs her palm on the palm.

BACK TO WOMEN:

They look sideways at Nadezhda and GOSSIP.

MOMENTS LATER

The room is filled with gentlemen. There are retired officials, beardless boys, students, office workers, small industrialists.

The tables are filled with bottles of wine, champagne, decanters with vodka and liqueurs, as well as treats - oranges, canapés with caviar and fish, small cakes, etc.

Nadezhda and Borya play WALTZ MUSIC.

Some women dance with men, some sit at the table, helping themselves and chatting.

One couple leaves their table and goes in the directions of the RED LIGHT OF THE PRIVATE ROOMS.

DISSOLVE TO:

GRIGORY RASPUTIN, 40s, sits at one of the tables which is full of treats and bottles. Grigory is dressed in an expensive embroidered silk shirt with a sky blue silk sash with large tassels, black corduroy pants, and knee-high boots in the softest leather.

He is surrounded by several women.

ANGLE ON THE GRIGORY: His head is covered with long strands of brown hair, parted, falling back, revealing a dark spot on his high forehead - a trace left after being wounded.

A wide pockmarked nose stands out on the face, narrow pale lips are hidden under an unkempt soft mustache.

The face, dark from the wind and sun, wrinkled, with visible folds, framed by a dark blond disheveled beard.

His eyes are hidden under wide eyebrows, the right eye is disfigured by some yellow knot.

Grigory beckons WAITER.

GRIGORY
(Russian folk song)
Barynyu!

He holds out a ruble generously.

WAITER

This very minute, sir!

He takes the money and bows professionally.

MOMENT LATER

The ORDERED MUSIC sounds. Nadezhda plays the piano and Boris plays the balalaika.

Grigory gets up.

Taking a few steps forward, he puts his hands behind the silk sash, and, starting to sway to the beat of the music, stomps his boot on the parquet floor and begins to dance.

MOMENT LATER

Slightly swaying, with the air of a seducer, he approaches one of the girls at his table and invites her to dance. His beard flutters, his feet stomp to the beat of the melody, and his sharp eyes study his partner.

TWO HOURS LATER

The MAZURKA MUSIC sounds.

Sweat drips from Grigory's face. His silk shirt is all wet. Grigory's woman-partner with burning cheeks and half-closed eyes is walking to a chair against the wall.

MOMENT LATER

Grigory stops and his eyes meet the eyes of Nadezhda.

GRIGORY

Played well! Come to the table!

He waves at her. Nadezhda glances at Borya.

GRIGORY (CONT'D)

The both! You!

He points at Borya and waves his arm to his now empty table. Nadezhda nods.

The MUSIC fades.

INT. GRIGORY'S TABLE - CONTINUOUS

Grigory waves to WAITER.

GRIGORY

Waiter!

He turns to Nadezhda and Boris.

GRIGORY (CONT'D)

(to his guests)

Wine, vodka?

NADEZHDA

Coffee, maybe.

She smiles shyly.

BORYA

What are you drinking, good sir?

GRIGORY

Madeira.

BORYA

I will not refuse a glass of it
too.

The waiter with a pen and notebook jumps to the table.

WAITER

I'm listening, sir!

He asks politely.

GRIGORY

Bottle of Madeira, coffee with
cream, and a cognac.

WAITER

This minute, Your Excellency!

He writes down.

GRIGORY

And cakes for lady and nuts for us.

WAITER

Of course, Your Excellency!

He rushes to the kitchen.

GRIGORY

(to Nadezhda and Borya)

Your Excellency!

He winks at them.

GRIGORY (CONT'D)
 My name is Grishka. Of course, for
 someone, I'm Grigory Efimovich.
 (to Nadezhda)
 And what is your name, my
 sweetheart?

NADEZHDA
 Nadia. Of course, for someone, I am
 Nadezhda Arsenievna.

She smiles.

GRIGORY
 (to Nadezhda)
 Nadezhda is hope - a very good
 name.

He puts his hand on her knee. Nadezhda pretends not to
 notice.

GRIGORY (CONT'D)
 (to Borya)
 And yours?

BORYA
 Call me Borka.

GRIGORY
 Good. You both played well! I have
 felt great!

NADEZHDA
 Good to hear, Grigory Efimovich.

GRIGORY
 (to Nadezhda)
 Are you new here? It was that fat
 with a red nose before.

NADEZHDA
 Yes, I'm new while the pianist is
 sick.

She nods.

MOMENT LATER

The waiter returns to the table with the order.

WAITER
 Madeira. Coffee with cream and one
 cognac. Cakes and nuts. Three
 rubles thirty-two kopecks.

Grigory takes money out of his pants pocket and holds it out to the waiter.

GRIGORY
Four rubles. Keep the rest.

WAITER
Thank you very much, Your
Excellency!

He bows and professionally pours the wine into the glasses. Moving around the table the waiter accidentally touches Nadezhda.

WAITER (CONT'D)
Pardon, madam.

NADEZHDA
(It's nothing, in French)
Ce n'est rien.

Smiling politely, the waiter bows slightly and runs away.

GRIGORY
(to Nadezhda)
What language did you speak to him,
Nadia?

NADEZHDA
French.

GRIGORY
Wow. And I'm almost illiterate.

NADEZHDA
I can help.

Her cheeks turn pink.

GRIGORY
Can you?

He slightly squeezes her leg. Nadezhda nods.

GRIGORY (CONT'D)
You know what?

He slides the cakes over to her.

GRIGORY (CONT'D)
Come tomorrow for tea... at six.
Gorokhovaya street sixty-four.

He looks into her eyes and pushes the glass of brandy towards her.

GRIGORY (CONT'D)
Will you come?

NADEZHDA
Yes, I will.

She says emphatically.

GRIGORY
Good. To your health!

He clinks his glasses with them and drinks his glass in one gulp. Borya sips his drink. Nadezhda pours a bit of brandy into her coffee.

GRIGORY (CONT'D)
(to Nadezhda)
Can you play Kalinka?

NADEZHDA
Yes, I can.

She takes her cake.

GRIGORY
And tonight?

NADEZHDA
Of course!
(to Borya)
Yes, Borya?

BORYA
Sure!

He grabs some nuts.

LATER

Nadezhda and Borya PLAY KALINKA.

When Rasputin steps into the middle of the room, about to ask a woman to dance, a GROUP OF OFFICERS jumps up and pulls out sabers. The woman SCREAMS.

The waiter opens his mouth and crouches in surprise and fear.

Simultaneously, several people in civilian clothes take out revolvers and point them at Grigory.

MOMENT LATER

Rasputin jumps back to his table and looks at the conspirators with a TERRIBLE GAZE.

GRIGORY
You want to end me!

He CRIES OUT.

The conspirators stand petrified as if paralyzed. They can't turn away from Rasputin's GAZE.

Silence.

THEN:

GRIGORY (CONT'D)
You were my enemies, but now you
are no longer enemies!

He looks over the conspirators.

GRIGORY (CONT'D)
You saw that my strength won! Don't
be sorry that you came here, but
don't be glad that you can leave.
Go home! I want to stay here and
rest.

Two young conspirators kneel in front of Rasputin.

CONSPIRATOR#1
Please, forgive us, Grigory
Efimovitch!

CONSPIRATOR#2
Please, forgive us, Grigory
Efimovitch!

GRIGORY
(with metal in his voice)
I won't forgive you, since I didn't
invite you here! I wasn't happy
when you came, and I won't be sad
when you leave!

The conspirators seemed to be dumbfounded.

GRIGORY (CONT'D)
Now go away! You are healed! Your
disastrous intentions are gone!

Heads down and huddled conspirators leave the premises.

CUT TO:

INT. GOROKHOVAYA STREET 64 - ENTRANCE - DAY

Wearing the same gray coat Nadezhda enters the wide bright lobby.

She passes the stuffed the moth-eaten wolf and a bear and a decadent window with a bush of withered roses.

INT./EXT. ELEVATOR - 3D FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Opening for her the elevator's door, a DOORMAN pointed to one of the high yellow doors with the number 20.

DOORMAN
You to Rasputin!

Nadezhda steps out.

EXT./INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Nadezhda turns to the elevator's door.

NADEZHDA
How do you know?

But the doorman closing the elevator's door didn't answer and the elevator immediately begins to descend.

EXT./INT. APARTMENT 20 - CONTINUOUS

Nadezhda RINGS the bell.

AKULINA (early 40s), a short, plump woman in a white kerchief opens the door.

AKULINA
Are you invited?

She speaks with a pleasant singing accent.

NADEZHDA
Yes!

AKULINA
Well, come in.

INT. APARTMENT 20 - CONTINUOUS

Nadezhda wants to take off her coat.