

La Bête

Written By

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Shooting Script

EXT. OPEN FIELD - NIGHT

FADE IN:

A cluster of sheep are still on a hill. A lone sheep grazes on a hill in the foreground. As it wanders about we hear ominous noises, leaves RUSTLING. Something else is moving.

While eating grass, it hears a noise close by and looks up and around hesitantly and goes back to its business.

We see the sheep from something's point of view, behind some shrubs.

A shadow looms over the sheep, the sheep turns around, as its eyes widen we zoom in to a close up of the sheep as it BLEATS in terror.

CUT TO:

INSERT: TITLE CARD "LA BÊTE: THE BEAST"

INT. MANSION, WALL - DAY

A portrait of a 18th century French family.

EXT. MANSION, YARD GARDEN TABLE - DAY

A plump, young BOY sits alone at a long narrow table with piles of gifts. Birthday decorations adorn the area, but the boy looks sad.

His MOM and DAD are the epitome of prim and proper. They stand around with other adults, keeping to themselves.

He looks around as if to speak, but changes his mind when he sees no one notices. The boy grabs a gift about to open it when his father snaps to a servant who stops the boy and opens the it for him, revealing a taxidermy pheasant.

DAD (O.S.)

Il est de mon récent chasse. La
meilleure faisan de la journée.

BOY

Merci?

He looks disappointed. The guests clap politely. The boy tries to show it off, but everyone has gone back to chattering to themselves. He sits alone.

A RUSTLING comes from the bushes.

A beat.

A dog pops up from behind and hops over straight towards the boy.

The boy is hesitant, trying to stay away from the dog, when it headbutts his hand. Seeing it's friendly, he pets the dog. He looks to his presents, grabs a ribbon, and ties a collar around the dog. The dog looks at it, barks, and the boy pets him lovingly as the dog licks him.

INT. MANSION, VARIOUS ROOMS - DAY

-The boy tries to get the dog to sit. It won't obey, doing the opposite of whatever the boy commands. He even tries to push its back end down, when the dog starts wagging its tail in his face. The boy laughs and give the dog an endearing pat.

-The boy sits reading a book intently. He hears a gross SCRATCHING noise. He looks over to see the dog attempting to scratch an itch, but he looks uncomfortable. The boy leans over and scratches the itch for him. The dog has the most blissful, pleased look across its face.

-The boy has his stuffed pheasant from earlier, throws it softly, the dog goes after it and comes back. He throws it with more strength, the dog takes a bit longer to come back. The third throw is the boy's most forceful. He waits, and waits, but the dog does not return. Tired of waiting he looks around.

END OF MONTAGE

Suddenly, we hear his parents off screen upset. YELLS, SCREAMS, and CLATTERING are heard in the distance.

INT. MANSION, PARLOR ROOM - AFTERNOON

The dog chews on some pastries spread about the floor. The room's in chaos. A lunch time set up destroyed.

The mother and friend panic and squeal towards the dog. The father is livid, face red, mustache twirling inward.

The dog goes after their guest and whatever snacks are on her table-like dress.

The boy gives a panicked look and the dad points to the door. The boy runs up to the dog, tears welling.

EXT. MANSION, YARD GARDEN - EVENING

The boy reluctantly ties up the dog to a tree. Leaving him with a little set up for the night. He hugs the dog goodnight.

INT. MANSION, BOY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The boy lies in bed, struggling to sleep. The dog BARKS. The barking continues getting more frenzied as we hear other UNFAMILIAR NOISES. Nonstop. Worried, he shoots up out of bed and throws his covers off which wipe the screen.

CUT TO:

EXT. MANSION, YARD - NIGHT

All that remains is a mess left behind; a broken leash tied to the tree, a turned over bowl, broken branches.

A beat.

He looks around the dog's ribbon hangs off a shrub's branch. He grabs it, hears a rustling in the maze, and goes into it.

EXT. HEDGE MAZE - NIGHT

The boy wanders corners around the maze. We see a creature's feet walking. The boy hears a RUSTLING and pauses mid step. He looks around and WHISTLES for his dog, but there is nothing but an empty hallway.

He proceeds forward, looking around. We see a point of view shot similar to the sheep opening.

As he walks past an opening in the hedges we see something move past behind him while he is looking in the opposite direction. He hears the noise and decides to follow it.

EXT. HEDGE MAZE, RECTANGULAR COURTYARD - NIGHT

He walks into a rectangular courtyard; statues, benches, and lights decorate the area. As he looks around he hears something moving in the shrubs ahead of him. He goes towards it when suddenly a menacing shape appears behind him.

The boy sees a shadow approaching him when he turns around we see THE BEAST.

The boy is horrified and books it back into the maze.

EXT. HEDGE MAZE - NIGHT

The boy dashes down the maze halls, the beast after him in the distance. We cut quickly back and forth between the beast and boy running.

The boy sees the beast's horns go past along the hedges. He takes a breath, and slowly inches away along the hedge wall thinking he's avoided it. Suddenly the beast's arms burst through the hedge wall, grabbing after the boy. He's in his clutches, his nightgown snagged by the beast. But the boy escapes, running for his life.

Dashing for his life, he rounds a corner to see the beast blocking his way. He runs in a different direction.

EXT. HEDGE MAZE, TOPIARY CIRCLE - NIGHT

The boy emerges into a topiary circle, surrounded by trees and bushes sculpted into unique shapes. The topiaries cast great shadows. Moonlight highlights the plants. He hides behind a sculpture.

We hear the beast coming closer, branches BREAKING, footsteps STOMPING. The beast wanders about when it finally sits in the center of the circle courtyard.

The boy hears the same gross SCRATCHING sound from earlier.

We see the boy peeking from behind the statue and he clutches his ribbon. Resolve washes over his face and he comes forward.

He puts his hand out to pet the beast and scratches its scales. The beast's tail moves. The beast turns its head and the boy gives a smirk when suddenly we hear a dog BARK.

The boy looks down and sees his dog. He looks back at the beast who's gotten up and the dog jumps into the boy's arms, barking at the beast. The beast headbutts the boy's arm softly.

A beat.

The dog licks the beast. The boy approaches the beast, less afraid and pets it.

FADE TO WHITE:

EXT. MANSION, YARD - MORNING

The boy is in the yard sitting, happy looking off in the distance. His parents come from behind, croquet mallets and ball in hand.

DAD
Pourquoi n'êtes-vous pas avec
vos chien?

BOY
Il est avec notre nouvel ami.

DAD
Nouvel ami?

The dog and beast appear at the hedge maze entrance. The parents are in complete shock. The beast comes with a live sheep in its mouth.

BOY
Abandonner cette.
(The beast drops the sheep.)
Bien, bien.

The parents look horrified as the beast looms over them.

INT. MANSION, WALL - DAY

A new portrait of the family adorns the wall. The boy poses happily with his pets and his parents stay at a distance in the background.

End.