

SIGNUM DIABOLI

Written by
Rubén Soler Ferrer

PÍXEL FOUNDATION
Avda. Barón de Cárcer 47, first floor 2on door.
46001. Valencia (SPAIN)
651032986
Hey@rubensolerferrer.com
Soler.ruben@gmail.com

Logline

In Spain of the XVII century a preacher, who fights against witchcraft, is alerted to the presence of a young woman who lives in a secluded forest.

Synopsis

Spain S.XVII. After the processes against the witches of Zugarramurdi, The Holy Inquisition decides not to judge more the witchcraft. However the people continue to panic those women who heal using plants and pact with the devil during the sabbaths. Pedro Zapena, a solitary preacher, travels from town to town warning of the dangers of witches and the need to take them before a religious tribunal. In one of his trips a peasant speaks to him of a young woman who lives isolated in a forest and whose eye has the mark of the devil. Peter decides to go find her and take her to the Holy Inquisition. During the trip, the young Marcela will fight against her tragic end because, as the book *Mallus Malificarum* states, "every woman who heals without education is a witch and must die."

00. INTERTITLE

"A woman who has the courage to cure without having studied is a witch and must die."

MALLEUS MALEFICARUM (15th Century)

FADE IN

SERIES OF SHOTS

A. EXT. 18th Century SMALL VILLAGE - DAY

PEDRO (50), wearing a wide-brimmed hat, waistcoat, Black neckerchief tied to the neck, boots and a sword, holds a bible in the hand that raises the sky.

PEDRO

Truly I tell you, that the servants
of Satan are among you.

B. INT. DEN - DAY

Hands pour leaves into a small cauldron.

PEDRO (v.o)

They conspire at night in a place which we
do not know And prepare potions following
the recipe whispered by the devil.

C. EXT. 18th Century SMALL VILLAGE - DAY

PEDRO looks at the audience intensely.

PEDRO

All of you are impatient because you go to
them in search of healing instead of
leaving your destiny in the hands of the
Lord.

D. INT. DEN - DAY

MARCELA (35), a young woman, brunette and whitish skin,
Walks through the forest collecting fruits from the bushes
and plants. She grabs them by the hand, watches and keeps
them in her small wallet.

PEDRO (v.o)

Believe me when I tell you that not all of
them are old and mature. No way! Many of

them are young and beautiful. The devil is clever and wants to tempt you easily in the face of beauty.

E. EXT. 18th Century SMALL VILLAGE - DAY

PEDRO shakes the Bible vigorously.

PEDRO

Remember, at night they change. When they celebrate their meetings, when they kiss the anus to Satan himself. They become animals and creeping into your houses to kidnap your children.

F. INT. DEN. - DAY

MARCELA, is preparing an herbal brew.

PEDRO (v.o)

And the demon prefers to corrupt women's faith because their mind is weak and so they are more credulous than men.

G. EXT. 18th Century SMALL VILLAGE - DAY

PEDRO

Listen to me, women. Hug Christ because he is the head of every male, and every male is the head of every woman. This is what the book says.

PEDRO raises the bible.

H. EXT. 18th Century SMALL VILLAGE - DAY

PEDRO keeps the Bible in a small bag. A YOUNG man approaches PEDRO and talks to him while he's pointing a path. The YOUNG man also points to his left eye.

PEDRO (v.o)

And praise who protected the male sex from the carnal appetite that women feel. He was willing to be born and suffer for us, and that is why he granted us such a privilege.

I. EXT. FOREST. - DAY

MARCELA walks through the forest and stops to look at some plants.

PEDRO (v.o)

Our mission as Christians is to free ourselves of these sinful women who turn their backs on God.

J. Exp. ROADS. - DAY

PEDRO starts the walk.

PEDRO (v.o)

That is why we must discover them, take them and bring them before the Tribunal of the Holy Inquisition because they are responsible for protecting our faith and judging heretics.

MARCELA walks towards a shepherds shelter.

PEDRO moves delicately but when doing so a stone slides between his feet and falls down the road.

MARCELA turns in surprise.

MARCELA

Who's there?

PEDRO leaves the bushes

PEDRO

Good Morning. Sorry if I have scared you.

MARCELA looks at PEDRO and continues walking toward the shelter.

MARCELA

You gave me a good scare! I was not expecting anyone.

PEDRO arrives at the refuge where he meets MARCELA.

PEDRO

Excuse me again. My name is Pedro Zapena. I have been recommended to come and see you.

MARCELA

Recommended? And who told you about this place

PEDRO

Claudia, the village seamstress. She told me about you. I would need a potion to appease my feeling for the Commendant's wife.

MARCELA

You can tell Claudia that she is wrong. I do not know anything about potions. I only work with herbs that help healing. I can't help you.

MARCELA goes to the entrance of the refuge.

Pedro holds her arm tightly.

MARCELA

What are you doing?

PEDRO

Make sure you are not going to scape, witch.

MARCELA

Release me! I'm not a witch.

PEDRO gives her a punch in the stomach and MARCELA falls to his feet.

PEDRO

You are. I know you serve the devil because you have his mark in your eye.

PEDRO brings the knife to her left eye.

PEDRO

Our Lord JESUS CHRIST has shown me the way to you! Now I will take you to the Holy Office so they can decide what to do with you.

Zoom on the eye of MARCELA. An area in the fog-shaped iris, begins to move.

FADE OUT

02. EXT. COUNTRYSIDE. - DAY

PEDRO and MARCELA walk through arid Castilian fields. PEDRO, who goes before MARCELA, holds a tied rope directly to her hands.

03. EXT. COUNTRYSIDE. - DAY

PEDRO and MARCELA continue walking without rest. In a moment, MARCELA falls to the ground, tired. PEDRO turns and gives a strong pull to the rope. MARCELA breaks down to cry.

MARCELA

Lord, can you tell me what evil I have done to you? I cry to your piety as a Christian. I'm not a witch.

PEDRO leaves the clothes on the ground and walks furiously to her. He picks her up.

PEDRO

Ask for all the clemency you want, but I will bring you before those who will judge you for witchcraft. You pact with the devil, steal children and offer them to the evil one during the black masses.

MARCELA writhes on the floor and looks at PEDRO completely disconcerted

MARCELA

I insist, sir. Let me go.

PEDRO approaches her and grabs her by the throat.

PEDRO

Insist everything you want but I will not let you go. You heal behind the Lord and for that reason they will judge you.

MARCELA looks at him with contempt. PEDRO gets up and pulls the rope.

PEDRO

And now go ahead. We have a long way to Madrid.

04. EXT. COUNTRYSIDE. - DAY

MARCELA and PEDRO continue walking on plains. PEDRO makes a stop on the road and sits down.

PEDRO

Stop! It's time to fill the throat.

PEDRO unties the bundle on his back and takes out a loaf of bread, a wine boot, a bowl and cheese. He draws his dagger, cut some cheese and bread. MARCELA sits down, not far from him.

PEDRO

You know? My mission in life is to fight heretics, to discover them and bring them to the one who must judge them. Luckily every day

you are less. That means we're doing a good job.

PEDRO eats and speaks in a condescending tone. MARCELA picks up the rope with caution.

PEDRO

You say that you heal using plants. But do you know who has put those plants on your path? The Lord, Almighty God. And you believe that you can use them to heal behind God, reciting prayers that the Devil himself whispered in your ear. What do you do? Do you kiss his anus, too?

MARCELA takes the rope with strength.

PEDRO

And does the devil's ass taste good?

MARCELA jumps to Pedro full of anger and manages to wind the rope around the neck of PEDRO's neck. Both begin to struggle, but PEDRO manages to give a head to MARCELA that falls on the ground. PEDRO removes the rope slowly, smiles, picks up the bread that has fallen and takes a bite. MARCELA stands up. At that moment, the dress she wears leaves her legs barely exposed to the hip. PEDRO stares at her legs and MARCELA notices it. Quickly cover.

PEDRO

The devil has chosen a good servant.

PEDRO spits and breathes heavily.

MARCELA slowly steps up to reveal the neckline.

PEDRO

The rest is over.

PEDRO picks up the boxes quickly and they both start the march.

05. EXT. FOREST. - AFTERNOON

PEDRO and MARCELA walk through a leafy forest.

MARCELA

Sir, I need to stop!

PEDRO

We'll stop when I say.

MARCELA

Please! Do you think that witches do not piss?

PEDRO

Do it as when you stand before the devil.

MARCELA is out of the way, but PEDRO gives a strong tug to the rope.

PEDRO

Are you hiding from the devil? I'm sure not.

MARCELA looks at him. Little by little the skirt is raised, slowly, while PEDRO watches her, it does not take the eye from her. MARCELA takes the time to seduce him. She squats and starts to pee. PEDRO does not look away. MARCELA raises her clothes a little more and reveals her ass. PEDRO is amazed at what he sees, closes his eyes tightly and squeezes a crucifix under his shirt.

PEDRO

Nice try, witch. Fortunately I have the Lord on my side. Let's go.

PEDRO starts the march quickly and drags MARCELA several meters. She barely gets to his feet.

06. EXT. FOREST. - LATE

PEDRO and MARCELA keep walking.

PEDRO

Tonight we will sleep in the forest ... There is not much left.

Suddenly MARCELA grabs a strong tug and the rope slips out of Peter's hands. MARCELA starts to run and PEDRO chases her. After escaping a few meters PEDRO gets to step on the rope but cut the ankle with a stone. MARCELA tries to escape but Pedro catches her hard and ties her to a tree.

PEDRO

Damn woman! I told you thath you will not be able to escape.

PEDRO drops down in front of her and carefully takes off his boot. It has a deep cut from which sprouts blood. He removes the scarf from his neck and presses the wound. MARCELA looks at him closely.

MARCELA

That wound looks bad.

PEDRO

I've come out of worse situations.

MARCELA watches how PEDRO suffers.

MARCELA

Do you think you're a really tough guy? Let's make a Deal.

PEDRO

With a witch? No way, if I have to die here, I will, but before I will execute you.

MARCELA

Listen to me! I am a healer. I use what Mother Nature gives me and I cure with that. I know nothing about grimoires, nor magic stones, nor goats. I have never participated in sabbaths or similar orgies.

PEDRO

Does not matter! You heal without having studied and therefore commit a heresy.

PEDRO separates the handkerchief with which he blocks the wound and bloods continues to sprout.

MARCELA

And what other solution do you leave us!

PEDRO

Your job is not to heal, but to be at home, to honor God and your husband. It must be so.

MARCELA

Who says that? Your book?

PEDRO

The word of God.

MARCELA

The word of God is not going to save you right now. We must clog the wound and keep blood from flowing. Listen to me. Let's make a deal. I will show you that I can stop the bleeding and you will set me free.

PEDRO nods and unties MARCELA from the trunk, which continues with her hands rolled up with the rope. The end of the rope is taken by PEDRO.

MARCELA

Give me the bowl.

PEDRO

It's in my pack.

MARCELA rummages through the material and pulls out the bowl. He puts the herbs and with a rock begins to crush them. Add wine and stir with the stem of the plant. MARCELA looks at PEDRO who has closed his eyes at that moment. Then she searches into her little wallet. She removes her hand in it until she finds a white flower. Quickly she takes it out and puts it between the other herbs. PEDRO opens his eyes and MARCELA stirs with more energy. When the mixture is pasty, remove it and drain it with her hand to dry it. MARCELA removes the fabric from PEDRO's wound and applies the mixture on it. PEDRO screams in pain and takes out the dagger.

PEDRO

Witch ... Not a song or a prayer the evil one.
Understood?

MARCELA

You will now understand how you can heal with plants. Men control any access to knowledge and leave us the breeding and household chores. You do not deserve to have in your hands the knowledge that Mother Earth and Father Sun give us.

PEDRO leaps in pain. MARCELA covers the wound with the cloth, presses and sits in front of PEDRO. He opens the sack and pulls out a piece of bread. The bread is hard. PEDRO gives him a bite, looks at it and throws it at MARCELA.

PEDRO

Take. Too hard for me.

PEDRO goes falling asleep while the wound stops bleed. MARCELA eagerly devours the crust of hard bread.

07. EXT. FOREST. - LATE

The sun is falling. A music, fun and bustle are heard in the background. PEDRO wakes up, looks around, and slowly sits up. He no longer has ankle pain. He looks at the ankle

where his wound was before and finds that it has disappeared. Look up. MARCELA is no longer tied to the tree. Their strings are right there. PEDRO manages to stand and walks to where the music comes from.

The music is heard with more intensity as it enters the forest. PEDRO watches as some YOUNG WOMEN, wearing loose, flowing clothes, walk among the trees. PEDRO follows them with his eyes and walks after them. It is reached by several YOUNG MEN who laugh as they hold hands.

Finally he finds them next to a PRIESTESS who wears a dark robe and lifts a bowl. Below it is MARCELA. She holds flowers in his chest and wears a single white. YOUNG WOMEN approach the PRIESTESS to sit at their feet. A MUSICIAN, dressed in black, with long hair and shirtless, tunes a melody in a hurdy-gurdy.

The PRIESTESS, while singing a song, throws over the body of MARCELA the bowl, from which drops a black liquid that bathes his body.

When the the YOUNG WOMEN finish they put their hands in the bowl and begin to distribute the black liquid between their bodies. They undress and take a few logs from the floor, anoint them with the black liquid, pass them between their legs and rub them with pleasure.

YOUNG MEN do the same with the black liquid and end up romping together.

THE MUSICIAN has red eyes now.

A group of men and women dance celebrating the ceremony.

PEDRO observes the scene and becomes angry. He takes the cross from his chest and draws his sword.

PEDRO

Oh Lord! Thank you for putting before me the essence of evil. My steel is your word and through it will pass sinners and devil worshipers.

PEDRO is surprised by two semi-naked YOUNG MEN appearing behind him. They struggle and they get to bend him. PEDRO drops his sword and falls on his knees with his arms crossed.

In front of him appears THE MUSICIAN, now totally converted into a demon, with horns that appear on his head. The eyes emit a red light.

PEDRO

Do you think I'm afraid of you? You can not corrupt my soul! Release me children of Satan!

PEDRO struggles but fails to break free of the men who seize him.

The music stops suddenly and only a few whispers are heard.

The group of women and men, who continue to dance slowly, now close to PEDRO and THE MUSICIAN caresses his face. YOUNG WOMEN, on the other hand, smear him with black liquid. MARCELA appears after THE MUSICIAN.

MARCELA

Now you also will be blessed by our Lord.

The whispers rise in intensity. THE MUSICIAN approaches the left eye of PEDRO and begins to speak an incomprehensible language.

PEDRO

The Lord will come to me ...!

The iris of Pedro's eyes explodes in a black stain that extends slowly.

08. EXT. FOREST. SUNSET

PEDRO is sitting with his eyes open. He has seizures. MARCELA watches him closely. She tugs at the rope from PEDRO and slowly gets up. She walks firmly and safely.

MARCELA

You will live in a hell that you yearn for now because there is no more fantasy than unfounded illusions.

MARCELA takes the sword of PEDRO and cuts the rope that surrounds her hands. She leaves her on the ground and runs away. The convulsions of PEDRO are stopping little by little until he is still and with the lost look.

09. EXT. FOREST. - NIGHT

MARCELA keeps walking hardly.

10. EXT. FIELDS. - DAY

The great solar disk appears by the horizon. MARCELA looks at him. She close her eyes, opens her arms and smiles. She keeps walking, tired.

FADE OUT.

END