



THE DANCE OF DEATH

Some masks reveal the truth.

Written by
Chryselle Brown

SHORT SCREENPLAY
Psychological Gothic drama
Supernatural fantasy
England, 1950

LOGLINE

In 1950 England, a repressed young seamstress follows a black-and-gold invitation into a masked theatre, where a seductive figure calling himself Death forces her to decide whether she is more afraid of dying—or of truly living.

A woman who chooses life

VALENTINA BOLSTER

Valentina makes exquisite clothes for other women while living a colourless life of her own. Her severe employer, Margaret, measures her skirt each morning. Her father Miguel's grief reinforces the belief that hope only brings pain.

THE INVITATION

A stranger dressed in bright orange delivers an invitation to a masked ball. Inside a candlelit theatre, Valentina enters a world of music, ritual and seduction. Humiliated by the other guests, she flees into a corridor and meets a mysterious man who tells her: "I am Death."

THE CONFRONTATION

A second invitation draws her back for the Feral Night. Animal masks, rhythmic drums and a tango with Death lead to a terrifying confrontation. Valentina finally turns her back on him and walks away. Death falls and disappears.

THE TRANSFORMATION

The next morning, she chooses a shorter red dress and challenges Margaret's control. Returning to the theatre in the exquisite gown she has made, she removes her mask. She no longer needs to hide. Her transformation is complete.

Must we first confront death before we learn how to live?

From grey into colour



THE ORDINARY WORLD

Narrow rooms, muted grey and brown, a bare bulb, ticking clocks and the precise rituals of the tailoring shop. Confinement shapes the frame.

THE MASKED THEATRE

Velvet, chandeliers, candlelight, Venetian masks and peacock feathers. Rich red, gold and black turn beauty into temptation and unease.

COLOUR AS CHARACTER

Grey gives way to blue, then red, and finally the exquisite gown Valentina claims for herself. Costume makes her inner transformation visible.

SOUND & MOVEMENT

The tick of a clock yields to operatic music, rhythmic drums and tango. The dance with Death is the signature set piece: intimacy, danger and awakening.

THE FINAL IMAGE

Valentina removes her mask. The visual journey ends in self-possession, with mystery around Death still intact.

A distinctive Gothic short

AUDIENCE APPEAL

Designed for adult audiences drawn to female-led psychological drama, Gothic atmosphere and supernatural ambiguity. The immediate hook is a dance with Death; the emotional reward is a woman finding the courage to claim her life.

WHY THE PROJECT STANDS OUT

A strong central role with a visible transformation. Memorable images—black-and-gold invitations, ornate masks and a red cloak. A signature tango sequence. A story about mortality, repression, identity and rebirth, expressed through costume, colour and movement.

PRODUCTION & DEVELOPMENT

The story centres on a tailoring shop, a bedsit, street scenes and theatre spaces. The period setting and masked gatherings call for careful costume, art direction and choreography. The short can stand alone, with a possible feature adaptation to explore in development.

THE WRITER

Chryselle Brown is an author and screenwriter. Her books include *The Conduit*, *Angels and Aliens* and *The Golden Templar*. *The Dance of Death* was selected for The Quiet Collective's From Script to Pitch retreat.

SEEKING

A producer, director or production partner with an affinity for visually distinctive psychological and Gothic storytelling to develop *The Dance of Death* as a short film.