

LOGLINE: When a young woman is the victim of a hit and run which breaks her prosthetic arm, her landlord and fellow tenant collaborate on her DIY home-treatment. One man wants her dying, the other wants her dead.

ABOUT THIS PROJECT

DEAD ZOO is a twisted love story following a young woman named CHARITY. She is a fascinating survivor of multiple coincidental tragedies. This story is about how against all odds, she comes to terms with her “extraordinary-ness”. A Native American girl, she is often enigmatically alluring and sometimes a train wreck. Having lost one of her arms in the San Francisco earthquake, she makes her living as a prosthetic-lifestyle webcam model. She is a tenant in the crumbling house of the strange, gothic taxidermist DR. PETER KHANLIAN. His house is filled with an obsessive collection of taxidermy animals native to the region. ANTHONY, his other tenant, is a weak-willed would-be cowboy pizza delivery boy. She wants Anthony and he wants to avoid her affections, he is repulsed by her prosthetic arm.

After Charity is the victim of a hit-and-run, breaking her prosthetic arm, Anthony finds her on the side of the road. She implores him not to take her to the hospital; reasoning her lack of Medicare to him, but personally abiding in her special metaphysical self-healing power. She employs a supernatural pain-stopping technique that entails moving her brain around the inside of her body. A scenario painted with “Charlie Kaufman-like” effect.

Soon, the feverish, bleeding and otherwise dying Charity finds her unrequited love for Anthony requited. Dr. Peter, meanwhile, has developed an interest in making Charity part of his collection. Anthony wants her dying, Dr. Peter wants her dead. Dr. Peter reveals his vision for his small empire. He sees his young tenants as the flourish to crown his collection of wildlife native to the frontier: the Indian Woman and the White Man. Charity’s vivid injuries and the declining transformation of her body, spurs Dr. Peter on. He makes preparations for the preservation of Charity’s body, the missing piece to his collection.

As Charity recedes into herself, her desire for Anthony remains, and Anthony is torn between basking in Charity’s blood-heightened affection, and submitting to the obligation he feels to get her to a doctor. The old landlord senses the new possessiveness and danger in Anthony, and engages a war of intimidation on the young man. Anthony submits to his impulse and takes Charity to the hospital, saving her from Dr. Peter’s plans to possess her skin for taxidermy. The loss of his trophy effectively kills Dr. Peter. The old man’s body is mounted and displayed within his own exhibit, as a Prospector of the Old Frontier. In death, however, Dr. Peter completes his memorial to the dead in which the living are props: Anthony and Charity are left with the dubious prize of Dr. Peter’s strange estate, of which they are integral parts themselves, dusting the dead.