

HEAVEN CAN WAIT

Written By

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TEASER

EXT. DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK - DAY

An upside down BLACK CROSS in the light brown dirt.

A simple rotation in perspective makes the cross upright. It is then revealed to be poisonous SNAKES; one SHORT and one LONG, overlapping each other. They slowly slither away from each other revealing:

Cacti, dust, blue sky, rocks, mountains, and dirt.

It looks like a sculpture park. A giant SYRINGE stands twenty feet straight up from the sand to the air. A body pierced cartoonishly by the needle in the ground.

Three huge FINGERS and an enormous dusty EYEBALL sit in different formations on the ground.

REE (21) androgynous, ethnically ambiguous person dressed in all black with a skeletal and skull-lined hooded sweatshirt walks along the desert stopping to admire the body and giant syringe.

REE

Now that's some burning man shit,
right there.

They remove their skull-covered hood revealing an objectively good looking person.

REE (CONT'D)

F.A. begin recording.

A beep.

REE (CONT'D)

This is Ree. R-E-E. HVN's friendly
guide to the great beyond.

Ree speaks and walks in a large circle. Like a Flintstones background, various uncut scenes unfold behind them. Some scenes they youthfully walk under, through or around.

REE (CONT'D)

I am currently in the lowest point in
North America: Death Valley.

As Ree speaks a scene of NATIVE AMERICANS (The Nevares Spring People) from 7000 BC takes place, gathering food.

REE (CONT'D)

Apart from the brutal struggle for survival by all of the flora and fauna living here, it's relatively peaceful. At least until something disturbs it.

A scene of bloodshed occurs as the next ancient group moves in to take the spoils and live a new life. Skulls are crushed, throats slit, blood soaking the rocks and clumping in the dirt.

REE (CONT'D)

There is a push and pull here; a utility only a place like this can offer. Over the centuries folks have come here looking to get away from something, or maybe run towards some opportunity.

In anachronistic fashion, old-timey GOLD RUSH MINERS trickle into the scene, mixing but not disturbing the Native Americans, which begin dwindling.

REE (CONT'D)

People have also used this place to try and get away with something. A murder, a blossoming romance...

The motion starts getting a bit more muddled here with miners collapsing from starvation, or fighting for gold.

REE (CONT'D)

...a murder, a betrayal, garbage removal: literal or figurative. Murder.

Looking at the scene.

REE (CONT'D)

Always murder.

The scenes of anachronistic people are colliding more.

We see a YOUNG COUPLE in fifties clothes kissing right next to a car we think is theirs, but as the camera continues on we see seventies era MAFIA TYPES pulling a HOODED PERSON out of the trunk.

REE (CONT'D)

But it's also a place where things
grow. A seed was once planted here.

The hooded person is shot in the head by the mafia people and
falls into a pre-dug hole.

REE (CONT'D)

And from that seed, I imagine what is
growing right now is a bloodlust only
vengeance can nourish.

DETECTIVES pull up in their car pointing at the mafia types,
like it's been the culmination of years of hard work.

REE (CONT'D)

Comeuppance!

At that instant the word is spoke the mafia folks pull their
weapons causing the detectives to open fire, killing the
mafia types.

Dust clears.

REE (CONT'D)

That's onomatopoeia. That's the sound
of justice! What that comeuppance is,
however, is hardly ever satisfying: to
the giver or receiver. Oh, Lady
Justice will deliver, but by the time
it gets to your door it's cold or
maybe you didn't even order it.

Music plays in the distance, and another lone gun shot blasts
through the air, dust kicking up from a contemporary MAN
shooting a WOMAN on the ground. He gets into the passenger
side of a vehicle that is playing the music and is driven
away leaving the bloodied body.

A move towards the body. Dust kicked up from the speeding car
off in the distance, music fading away.

By this time, blood from the enormous fingers and eye have
been pooling larger and larger surrounding the fresh body.

The faint sound of a deep repeated, unearthly noise slowly
builds.

Ree looks up at the sky towards their maker.

REE (CONT'D)

You probably want that comeuppance
because your only child is roasting
like pig on a spit in a literal hell
you helped create.

Closer still to the body as it lies face up, face barely
recognizable from such previous blunt trauma. Ree looks at
it, a deep repetitive sound getting more and more
overwhelming and powerful.

They put their hood back up, contemplating the delicate scene
before them.

REE (CONT'D)

That must really weigh on a person.

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ACT I

EXT. LOS ANGELES SKYLINE - NIGHT

Establishing shot

A city with an unmistakable skyline. Lights pepper the darkened smog. Taller, unfamiliar skyscrapers, dwarf the formerly large buildings we've come to know. A grotesquely large wall with animated ads rises above the smog off in the distance. The wall seems to surround the city.

EXT. APT BUILDING - NIGHT

Establishing shot

A building situated in the the last holdout of gentrification. A place in flux; sandwiched in time where the art kids and homeless live.

INT. LOS ANGELES STUDIO APT - NIGHT

Establishing shot.

A small studio apartment. The studio is spartan to say the least. A flat screen TV, A bed on the floor with a red sheet, a desk, a chair, and some martial arts equipment. Nothing adorning the walls but a series of marks near a bed. Slashes in groups of five numbering 216.

An alarm pierces through the early morning waking a LATINA WOMAN (42) from her slumber. She is lying face up in her bed. She's clearly exhausted.

WOMAN

Off.

Despite her command the alarm continues.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Stop. Off.

The alarm continues.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Alarm. Stop. Cease. Basta Ya!

She screams, shoving the pillow over her own face, before throwing her pillow down again. The alarm continues.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
Fucking alarm!

FUCKING ALARM continues, but then speaks in a calm tone.

FUCKING ALARM
Yes, Luci? Good morning.

LUCI
STOP!

The alarm finally stops. (She's named her alarm "Fucking Alarm" and it will only respond as such).

She rises like an octogenarian, well beyond her years. She grabs the knife that is under her pillow and logs another slash to the wall: 217. 217 days rising like this.

LUCI
Fucking Alarm, transfer latest dream sequence to main monitor and rewind ten seconds.

The monitor turns on suddenly in her room. She studies the image on the screen. It's what we've just witnessed, but it's frozen now, with Ree looking at the body.

LUCI (CONT'D)
Play image. Include audio.

The scene plays out as we've just seen.

REE (CONT'D)
You probably want that comeuppance because your only child is roasting like pig on a spit in a literal hell you helped create. That must really weigh on a person.

LUCI
Stop.

The image stops again. Luci touches her face remembering something.

LUCI (CONT'D)
Loop sequence.

The scene begins visually and audibly looping.

REE (O.S.)

You probably want that comeuppance
because your only child is roasting
like pig on a spit in a literal hell
you helped create. That must really
weigh on a person.

She moves to the bathroom area of the studio. She ties her salt and pepper hair up in a bun, removes her well worn t-shirt revealing a sinewy back that looks slightly like the surface of the moon. Permanent bruises, the exit of a gunshot wound smack in the middle of her back just below where her spine gently protrudes.

REE (O.S.)

You probably want that comeuppance
because your only child is roasting
like pig on a spit in a literal hell
you helped create. That must really
weigh on a person.

She splashes water in her face, towels it off and heads back to the bed area. The more she moves the more she becomes a bit more spry. She grabs a maid's uniform, and carefully pulls it over her head.

REE (O.S.)

You probably want that comeuppance
because your only child is roasting
like pig on a spit in a literal hell
you helped create. That must really
weigh on a person.

CU Luci clipping on name tag to her uniform that reads:

MARIA

LUCI

Stop.

The image and audio stop once more.

LUCI (CONT'D)

Delete dream sequence.

FUCKING ALARM

Are you sure you want to delete
forever?

Luci thinks for a moment.

LUCI
Cancel delete. Archive sequence.

FUCKING ALARM
Archiving sequence.

Luci removes the two RINGS that are attached to a WATCH device she is wearing from her middle and ring fingers, the image immediately disappears, as if directly connected. Which it is.

She grabs a cardigan sweater and heads out to the temporarily cold Los Angeles morning.

EXT. APT BUILDING - BUS STOP - NIGHT

Luci makes her way to the bus stop just outside of her apartment, and takes a seat on the bench.

An animated sign rudely illuminates her face, displaying different advertisements. The contrast of the dark around her causes her to squint, but she peers at it.

ON THE SCREEN

The same objectively good looking, androgynous, ethnically ambiguous person (REE) smiling in a hooded sweatshirt with the outlines of a skull on the hood and rib cage on the chest. They grab an offscreen hand bringing them towards a bright light with the words:

Heaven can wait, but can you wait for HVN? Secure your space in paradise NOW.

And finally the largest text:

HVN

Luci pinches the bridge of her nose with her fingers and keeps her head down, clearly disgusted with the imagery.

Three party goers (two WHITE MEN, one WHITE WOMAN, early 20s) boisterously approach the bench Luci occupies, clearly still in party mode from the night.

The first man and woman drunkenly plop next to Luci on a bench that has very little room to begin with, forcing Luci to move even more.

The second male stands towering and swaying over them, screaming at the top of his drunken, smoke-filled lungs.

REVELER 1 MALE
I'm immortal! I'm gonna live forever!

He stumbles.

REVELER 1 MALE (CONT'D)
Ah, shit.

REVELER 2 WOMAN
Easy! You almost took out that old
lady.

Luci keeps her head down, but eyes the three partiers, lamely attempting to hide her annoyance at their ageism.

LUCI
(sotto) God, it's too early for this
shit.

REVELER 3 MALE
Ah, let 'em celebrate, that lucky son-
of-a-bitch's parents just got him a
deluxe plot in HVN.

Reveler 1 is still on all fours

REVELER 1 MALE
(slurring) Yeah, lemme celebrate.
Lemme.

He begins dry heaving.

REVELER 2 WOMAN
Oh, god...

Reveler 1 begins vomiting right in front of the bench where everyone else is seated, a light spray peppering everyone's shoes.

Luci moves her feet and self on the bench slightly to clear her shoes.

REVELER 2 WOMAN
(slurring to Luci) I'm so sorry, Miss.

Luci offers a lame grin but is clearly tired and annoyed.

Reveler 3 picks up Reveler 1.

REVELER 3 MALE

(hiccuping) Dude! Ok, come on. You can't die just yet, your parents card probably hasn't been fully charged yet.

The three mumble indistinctly, with Reveler 2 looking at her watch device checking the status of their ride.

A driverless cab pulls up to them and the party goes sloppily pile in.

Alone again, Luci stares at the puddle of vomit near her foot.

CU the flecks of vomit on her shoes.

Moments later a driverless bus pulls up, another animated sign for HVN flashing along the side.

ON SCREEN

We can't all be set for life, but now you can be set for the afterlife.

HVN and HVN Deluxe

She walks in and takes a seat. The bus pulls away.

INT./EXT. BUS - DAWN

Luci glances around the bus. It's so early it's literally only her on this driverless bus. She's completely alone, only the loud structural shaking of the vehicle as it rolls over pot holes and neglected asphalt. With nothing demanding her attention inside she turns her gaze out the window.

LUCI'S POV

In the distance the sun is beginning to rise just over the ominous and unfamiliar wall that runs along the border of Los Angeles. Only the absolute tallest buildings pierce through the dark monolith.

EXT./INT. THE ESTRELLA - HOTEL - DAWN

Establishing shot

A gratuitously opulent hotel with fountains, lights, Rococo

style EVERYTHING with a slight futuristic spin. The place is dripping with seemingly ironic religious iconography, letting the guest know, "you are in the good place".

INT. THE ESTRELLA - DAWN

POV Front desk out towards the street.

Luci's bus pulls up in the distance and she exits. Walking toward the door, but veering off to the left. She's not allowed to walk in the same way the guests are. It's the service entrance for her.

EXT. SERVICE ENTRANCE RAMP - DAWN

Luci makes her way to the service entrance where her fellow maids and bellhops are smoking or vaping in the back. In the distance in the break room a television plays. A newscast grabs her attention.

The REPORTER (FEMALE 30s) delivers the headlines.

REPORTER

Another spate of terrorist bombings set off near HVN's complex this morning. The terrorist group calling themselves AMALGAM once again claimed responsibility for the explosions. No reported injuries at this time.

Luci's eyes are drawn down to the news ticker.

CU newsfeed ticker scrolling:

THE SUPREME COURT presented by COKE Makes Monumental AI Rape Case Decision

Extreme CU

HVN'S GRAHAM ODIN DAVIS to make rare visit to US.

This knocks the proverbial wind out of Luci, and she collapses against the heavy metal service door causing it to clang loudly.

One of her coworkers DAHLIA (46) runs to her side. She is a taut, small, Filipino woman.

DAHLIA

You Ok?

LUCI
Yeah...yeah. I'm fine. Thanks. Just
got dizzy for a second.

DAHLIA
You sure?

Luci is slowly getting her bearings.

LUCI
Yeah, thanks.

DAHLIA
Let's get you some water.

INT. THE ESTRELLA - SERVICE AREA

The pair enter through the heavy doors and Luci drinks some water. After she takes a breath she clocks in. The usual run of the mill POS screen appears.

Luci begins typing rapidly. The screen disappears, revealing the terminal access. She's searching for something and she clearly possesses knowledge well beyond the skills of a maid. Fingers pregnant with knowledge of programming help navigate her to the internal guest directory.

Scanning and scanning she finally comes across a name.

ON SCREEN

STEVEN PRICE RM 217 Check in: NOON Status: NOT Checked In

She holds her hand to her mouth and bites her fist, visibly shaking.

LUCI
Fucking Alarm, let me know when it's
noon.

FUCKING ALARM
Alarm set for noon.

Luci closes out the server revealing the original POS and she collects her CART. As she walks by Dahlia she whispers in her ear something indistinguishable.

Dahlia looks at her with understanding and nods. Luci heads off to do her duties.

INT. MONTAGE - VARIOUS ROOMS - THE ESTRELLA - LUCI WORKING

Luci cleans various huge and gorgeous rooms doing the usual maid duties: Toilets cleaned, towels picked up, beds made, curtains opened, finding disgusting things in wastebaskets.

Occasionally between each room she will slow down and walk by ROOM 217.

In one room she puts children's toys from the ground onto the desk neatly, then sees on the night stand a copy of a children's book entitled

CU cover of book

"GRAHAM GOES TO HVN"

Luci flips through it. It's an overly childish book with images of a person named GRAHAM DAVIS. The story is extolling his good works, how he created this world changing device called HVN which created a new afterlife and saved humanity. It is filled with fucked-up, xenophobic, racist imagery of the "Backwards Thinking Jew", "Christian Yokel", "Terrifying Muslim".

As Luci gets to the middle of the tiny book she clears her throat and slowly drips spits in the middle, closing the book on her phlegm before putting it back on the dresser.

She continues cleaning, but much to her chagrin feels a pang of guilt for soiling a child's property like she did, no matter how racist the subject matter. She pries open the children's book again with all of it's grossness, and attempts to clean up the mess she made.

FUCKING ALARM

It is now noon.

Luci walks by ROOM 217.

Luci eats alone in the break room

Luci looks at the TERMINAL again and sees

On Screen:

STEVEN PRICE RM 217 Check in: NOON Status: CHECKED IN

As she walks from the terminal Dahlia casually gestures to Luci. This brings Luci over where she opens a compartment in her CART. Inside of a little drawer is a syringe as well as some surgical equipment.

END MONTAGE

INT. THE ESTRELLA - OUTSIDE ROOM 217 - NIGHT

Establishing shot

The hallway of The Estrella is just as ornate as the lobby. Red carpets and beautiful wallpaper. The door to Room 217 is just like every other one on this floor.

Luci and Dahlia stand outside of the room.

Luci knocks on the door putting on an over the top Latin accent.

LUCI

Housekeeping! You order fresh towels?

The voice on the other side of the door is slurred and muffled.

STEVEN (O.S.)

Wha?

LUCI

Housekeeping! This room 217. We get a call you need towels and a room clean!

STEVEN (O.S.)

I didn't order any room service.

Luci knocks again, like she didn't hear.

LUCI

Housekeeping! Anybody inside? I come in to clean.

STEVEN (O.S.)

No, I didn't order any cleaning!

INT. THE ESTRELLA - INSIDE ROOM 217 - NIGHT

It's dark in the room, edges of a mess can be seen, with bottles strewn about. It's a pig sty in there.

Luci uses her key card to quickly open the door to Room 217.

STEVEN PRICE (WHITE MALE 40s) in a black room-issue robe drunkenly stumbles in the darkness towards the door as it begins to open.

She and Dahlia push the cart in, speaking like no one is in the room. They start moving things around, but don't turn the light on. Light gently illuminates the room from the open door.

DAHLIA

I can't believe Deborah just didn't show up.

LUCI

(in heavy fake accent) Yes, we had better get overtime for these long hours. Estoy consada.

DAHLIA

That means you're tired, right?

LUCI

Si, I'm always tired, mija.

MAN

(sotto) God damn immigrants. (then audibly) I fucking said I didn't want any towels!

Dahlia screams.

DAHLIA

Pakshet! Someone is in here!

LUCI

Oh no! Mister, we are so sorry.

Steven grabs Luci by the elbow, trying to get her out.

While drunkenly handling Luci, Dahlia quickly extends a Rothco 31" expandable baton, and brings it quickly to his kneecaps breaking the bone immediately.

Steven screams bloody murder at the seemingly random act of violence.

STEVEN

What the hell!?

He collapses on the ground, but clearly has some training, rolling as best as he can.

Luci then extends her own collapsible baton, and brings it down onto his neck and shoulders.

Amped with rage Steven crawls towards Dahlia, pulling at her legs, and grabbing her causing her to trip.

The fight between the three is ugly and ungraceful.

Seeing his legs exposed from the robe, Luci pulls a BLADE from her apron, and sticks it deep into the top area of the Steven's calf muscle, slicing it down to his Achilles Heel.

It happens so fast and so cleanly the man doesn't notice until blood is pouring. He looks at his leg and grabs it.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

What the fuck have you done to me! Do
you bitches know who I AM??

Luci brings her baton across his cheek drawing more blood and dispatching a few of his teeth.

Dahlia circles around while Luci grabs the syringe.

There is still fight in him, but he is drunk and bloated, and in contrast the women are sharp and trained.

In the growing pool of blood, Dahlia gets him in an arm and neck lock on the floor incapacitating him.

Luci, makes sure to step on his busted knee again, then plunges the syringe deep into his neck, expelling its contents.

After a while he no longer has fight in him.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

(fading) Who the hell...

Luci rises, shuts the door, causing pitch blackness. She then turns the lights on temporarily blinding him.

Slowly wiping the blood from his eyes and adjusting to the light he begins showing signs of extreme sluggishness.

His eyes, riveted to Luci with a cocktail of confusion, then understanding, rage and fear begins whispering, as his vocal chords are beginning to paralyze.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

(whispering)Luuuuu....

No longer needed for the element of surprise, Luci's fake accent is now completely gone.

LUCI

Yeah, Steven. It's Luci, you fuck.

His eyes are the only things able to move as they helplessly follow Luci and Dahlia through the room.

They pick him up, awkwardly placing his paralyzed frame into a rich mahogany leather chair.

Luci heads to her cart and begins pulling out the medical equipment.

LUCI (CONT'D)

You haven't changed one bit. You're still a drunken racist, self-righteous, oozing urethra posing as a man. You're still a blunt little instrument wielded by GRAHAM to single-handedly squeeze the last remnants of joy from my life.

The tension and anger in her face ease a little.

LUCI (CONT'D)

Fucking Alarm, what time is it?

FUCKING ALARM

Luci, the time is one o' clock.

Luci gives a sad smile, looks at the surgical equipment in her hand, and then back at him.

LUCI

Would you look at that, Steve?

Terror fills his eyes as she slowly approaches him, instruments in hand....

ACT II

INT. PENTECOSTAL CHURCH - DAY [BEGIN FLASHBACK]

A church half-filled with congregants.

An organ plays very loudly with the sounds of moaning and indistinguishable speaking in tongues from numerous people. It sounds like chaos.

A song (JESUS LORD TO ME) is being sung at the same time.

Over the din, a man's mic'd voice rings out.

TYSON (8) a mixed black and white boy is standing with with others in the front of a congregation (MEN, WOMEN, and CHILDREN predominantly WHITE and LATINX), dressed in very dated clothes from the 90s. His brow is furrowed in concentration, eyes closed.

CHOIR (O.S.)

Jesus, Jesus, Lord to me...

PASTOR (O.S.)

I know a lot of you are hurting!

TYSON POV

He peaks down the line at the PASTOR (WHITE MALE 55) holding the mic laying hands on the folks in the line. He is in a tie, with no jacket, sleeves rolled up like he's hard at work. Hair is matted down with sweat, face red from yelling.

As the pastor touches each congregant, they are falling to the ground crying, writhing and speaking in the gibberish of some improvised language.

CHOIR (O.S.)

Master, Savior, Prince of Peace....

PASTOR (O.S)

Be healed in the name of Jesus Christ
of Nazareth!

Another congregant falls. The pastor is slowly approaching Tyson, who is growing increasingly nervous.

CHOIR (O.S.)

The ruler of my heart today...

PASTOR

But I'm here to tell you there is a
God who is here to free you from the
chains that Satan has you bound in!

The pastor faces a woman in her late 60s, and plants his
sweaty palm on her forehead.

PASTOR (CONT'D)

Be HEALED! Hum shum a die o lo lo ki!

The woman falls back with no regard for what it will do to
her aged bones, slamming straight to the ground, adding her
cries to the din of the church.

Tyson is very concerned, but attempts to keep his eyes
closed. Occasionally peaking, and mumbling prayers.

TYSON

Thank you Jesus. Please forgive me of
all my sins...

CHOIR (O.S.)

Jesus, Lord to Me...

PASTOR

Chains of alcoholism!

He touches a red-faced overly bloated MAN, causing him to
fall.

PASTOR (CONT'D)

Chains of fornication, masturbation
and adultery! The fires of hell are
very real, my friends!

Touching 3 more members, each one falls.

TYSON

Please, Jesus, help me be better.

Tyson POV

The pastor steps right in front of Tyson. His belt and tie at
Tyson's eye level.

PASTOR

Just let the Holy Spirit enter into
you, and fill you with his love, and
you will know a peace that surpasses
(MORE)

PASTOR (CONT'D)
all understanding! Oh shana lo lo nika
 so lo hun dai!!

The pastor thrusts his hand on to Tyson's forehead, and Tyson throws himself to the ground, shouting indistinguishable nonsense, eyes closed, and occasionally peaking to see where the pastor is.

The moans of the congregation grow, it sounds like an orgy almost as the music crescendos.

CHOIR (O.S.)
 We exalt thee...We exalt thee...We
 exalt thee, Oh Lord....

CHURCH MEMBERS
 He is worthy! Praise his name!

Voices and music rise, and slowly growing among the din a woman's voice begins piercing through strangely.

CHURCH MEMBERS
 He is worthy! Praise his name!

WOMAN (O.S.)
 (moaning) Fuck my white ASS with that
 big black DICK!

CHOIR (O.S.)
 We exalt thee.

WOMAN (O.S.)
 (moaning) Yeah...yeah...just like that
 daddy! Just. Like.That!

CU on Tyson's face as he lies prostrate with eyes closed occasionally peaking to the side.

END FLASHBACK

INT. NEW YORK BEDROOM - DAY

Establishing shot of his room, standard single man fare.

CU on Tyson's (30) face eyes closed like when he was a child occasionally peaking, the tinny sounds of a woman's moan coming from his LAPTOP. The same phrases we heard in the previous scene. He is hard at work pleasuring himself, sweating on this hot summer day but having a difficult time.

WOMAN (O.S.)
 (moaning) Fuck my white ASS with that
 big black DICK!

WOMAN (O.S. CONT'D)
 (moaning) Yeah...yeah...just like that
 daddy! Just. Like. That!

EXT. NEW YORK APT BUILDING EAST HARLEM - DAY

Establishing shot (laptop sounds vaguely heard)

A typical New York building in East Harlem. This is a more familiar present day version of the city. Outside Tyson's apartment, a FUNERAL PARLOR tucked right nearby.

A funeral procession is letting out. MOURNERS file out dressed in black. Mainly LATINXS ranging from children to elderly are crying and congregating outside.

As the casket is slowly being brought out, a band begins to play a beautiful Mexican dirge. It is VERY loud. Horns, guitars, drums, etc.

INT. NEW YORK BEDROOM - 3RD FLOOR- DAY

Tyson's concentration breaks as the music from the funeral overpowers the sounds from his laptop.

He closes the laptop to look outside of his window which faces the street.

EXT. NEW YORK APT BUILDING EAST HARLEM - DAY

TYSON POV

A WOMAN (50s) thin, with salt and pepper hair is crying hysterically, and grabbing at the coffin. Presumably this is a newly minted widow.

CU the YOUNG WOMAN (25) making all the noise with her trumpet: Curvy, with jet black hair tied back tight, in an all black 6 piece mariachi outfit in pants, and a bright red scarf tied around her neck. She cuts a striking figure, and she's death itself on that trumpet.

The procession begins to file into cars, beginning to slowly drive away.

INT. NEW YORK BEDROOM - DAY

CU Tyson's face is clearly impressed and a bit enamored despite the juxtaposition of masturbation near a funeral.

TYSON

Damn. OK...

He pops open his laptop where the hint of the porn he was watching has been paused. He clicks a few times.

ON SCREEN:

Search: latina sex

INT. NEW YORK APT BUILDING - NIGHT

Tyson gets dressed in a loose shirt, and pants he's been wearing for several days straight. He heads out of his bedroom door.

EXT. BAR - LIQUID LIKE (A DISTINGUISHED DRINKING DEN) - NIGHT

Establishing shot

A Harlem bar on the corner of the street.

INT. BAR - LIQUID LIKE (A DISTINGUISHED DRINKING DEN) - NIGHT

Establishing shot.

Nothing special about the bar, just 4 walls and booze inside. Some attempts are made to make it special, but come across a few rungs lower than kitsch. Not a whiff of irony or club vibe. Just a practical place.

Tyson takes his seat at the bar corner of the bar alone and enjoys a beverage or two. Another lonely MAN sits quietly nursing a drink. CANDLES in RED VOTIVES line the bar.

In walks the YOUNG WOMAN (LUCI) from the funeral still dressed to the nines in mariachi attire and red scarf. She's like a beautiful sore thumb, and completely stands out amongst the dingy, melting barflies.

Like the heroes of the old west she walks, little spurs making small ringing noises. She sidles up to the bar and sits next to a LONELY MAN and catty-corner from Tyson.

She orders from the bartender.

BARTENDER
What can I get ya?

LUCI
Tequila and sprite, please.

BARTENDER
You got it.

Luci sips her drink.

She and Tyson both spy the LONELY MAN secretly dipping his finger into a VOTIVE, getting wax on his finger, and putting it clandestinely into his mouth.

They are both bewildered, but this is too strange not to watch, locking eyes in the process.

The LONLEY MAN leaves, but the two remain. No one in between them.

Tyson takes a sip of beer.

LUCI
(to Tyson) Man, I kind of miss that
guy waxing poetic.

Tyson attempts to not spit his beer out.

LUCI (CONT'D)
He was probably just warming up for
Madame Tussauds.

He laughs, getting beer all over his shirt, and coughing.

TYSON
Yo, what WAS that?

LUCI
I think that was one of those "only in
New York" moments.

TYSON
I might even localize that to "only in
Liquid Like".

LUCI
Oh my god, is that the liquid they are
referring to?

TYSON

I never really thought about it, but you might be right.

LUCI

You come here a lot, then?

Tyson takes a sip of his beer.

TYSON

Are you asking if I come here often?

LUCI

Apparently? As soon as I said it I was like, "shit".

TYSON

I actually live right across the street.

She points at his sweat pants.

LUCI

Big night out, then? What are you doing so far from the shire?

TYSON

Oh! A Lord of the Rings fan? That's what I'm Tolkein about!

LUCI

Noooo!

TYSON

What? That shit is fire!

Luci forces a straight face. Like she's not amused.

TYSON (CONT'D)

Look, let me get the next round, and we can really dig in to the differences between Sauron and Saruman.

LUCI

Are you even saying words?

Luci takes a moment and finishes her drink.

LUCI (CONT'D)

That sounds like a good plan. I've been having trouble sleeping lately and could use the aid.

Tyson slides over to her side, and they begin talking more.

TYSON

I'm Tyson by the way.

LUCI

Luci.

INT. NEW YORK BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tyson's bedroom door slams open as Luci and Tyson make out furiously in the room. Clothes come off. Tripping and awkwardness occur as the two are extremely drunk. They hit the bed.

Tyson on top tries to perform but can't. He's already spent from earlier.

TYSON

Ah, shit. I'm so sorry.

LUCI

It happens.

TYSON

I didn't think anything was going to happen today so I already took care of myself.

LUCI

It's ok!

TYSON

No, it's not. On top of that, my boxer briefs looks like skorts.

LUCI

I did feel like I was being fingered by a jr high girl.

Tyson reacts.

LUCI (CONT'D,)

Tyson! It's ok. Honestly. I was just at a funeral. I'm not even 100% here. No offense.

Tyson sits up and grabs his shirt.

TYSON

None taken. So that WAS you out there.

Luci looks puzzled.

TYSON (CONT'D)

Yeah, the funeral parlor. It's right outside my house. I thought maybe that was you down there. You were playing the trumpet? But I wasn't sure.

LUCI

Ah.

TYSON

Are you in a group or something? Do you get hired to play at funerals?

LUCI

Just my father's.

Tyson is clearly embarrassed. Hand to face.

TYSON

Shit. I'm so sorry. I didn't know. How are you doing? Sorry, here I am climbing all over you, and you're going through some serious shit.

Tyson reaches for a pipe filled with weed.

LUCI

I could use some self-medication. That's probably the most healthy thing for me, right? Sex with a stranger and drug use after my dad's funeral?

TYSON

Sounds like a solid Sunday to me. Minus the father thing.

Luci takes a hit from the pipe.

LUCI
Minus the father thing.

TYSON
Can I ask how he passed?

LUCI
Pancreatic cancer. He was in his
fifties. It's really aggressive.

Tyson thinks for a beat.

TYSON
I'm sorry for your loss. What do you
say we order some food, shoot the
shit, and if we feel like it, make out
with our shirts off again. Or do
nothing.

LUCI
Ok, do you mind if we just order a
salad from a pizza place. Those are my
favorite.

TYSON
Uh, sure?

LUCI
Maybe extra onion slices, no dressing.
How does that sound?

Tyson is reaching for his phone to order.

Luci looks at Tyson, seeing he's trying to be nice.

LUCI (CONT'D)
And a cup for water. But no water in
it. Please.

Tyson looks up from his phone at Luci, not believing.

Luci grins at Tyson.

TYSON
Mind if I get the water on the side? I
like to dip my undressed lettuce and
onion slices in it.

LUCI
That's weird. And probably a red flag
for me.

Tyson playfully looks around his room.

TYSON

Damn. I thought I'd put that laundry away. I guess, let me call you a car.

INT. NEW YORK APT BUILDING - NIGHT - LATER

The two are sprawled out on the bed, greasy pizza boxes opened with most of the pizza gone.

The two are pretty high at this point. Laughing.

Outside a man and woman are fighting on the street. Occasionally reaching levels that make it in to the room.

TYSON

Do you think our nose hairs have a smell? And like everything we smell has the slightest tinge of nose hair on it? And we just don't know because we smell it all the time?

LUCI

You mean like when you smell a rose or something it's rose AND nose hair?

TYSON

Yeah.

LUCI

Well, would a nose by any other hair smell as sweet?

TYSON

Yes! I have died. I have died and gone to heaven. I have pizza, a whip-smart, and hot I might add, gal in my bed.

The fight breaks through.

MAN (O.S.)

You can't talk to me like that!

WOMAN (O.S.)

Fuck YOU! You aren't even listening to me, why would I talk to you any differently, you fucker!

LUCI

Where do think you go when you die?

Tyson sits up a bit uncomfortable.

TYSON

Oh no, is this a Children of God fishing tactic? Sleep with the whores and they will come to Christ kind of thing?

LUCI

Exactly, and this is our uniform. Well, Mexico version, I'm just on a layover from JFK.

Tyson relaxes a bit.

TYSON

I knew this was too good to be true.

LUCI

No, but seriously, what do you think?

TYSON

Oh man, I usually avoid all talks of death when I'm high. It's a slippery slope.

LUCI

Come on! We'll jettison if it gets too deep. But given the circumstances...

She points at her funeral garb strewn about the room.

LUCI (CONT'D)

...It seems appropriate.

TYSON

Fine. I used to believe in heaven and hell and all that shit. And the rapture scared the shit out of me.

LUCI

What's that?

Tyson sits up even more and slides the pizza box down towards the foot of the bed.

TYSON

You don't know about the rapture? How did you grow up?

LUCI

Catholic. That wasn't a thing.

TYSON

Oh man. Well, consider yourself lucky because the fear of a sudden and massive disappearance of humans was little Tyson's boogie man. Anyway, that's a story for another day. As far as now, what do I believe? I'm not sure. I guess that this is it?

LUCI

Kind of like your existence before you were born?

The fight outside interjects.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Why would you say that?

MAN (O.S.)

Hey! Hey fuckhead! Yeah, you enjoying me and my girl fighting? Are we entertaining for you?

TYSON

Exactly. But little parts of me get scared I'm going to hell or some equivalent. My background really seared that in to my brain.

LUCI

How were you raised?

TYSON

Pentecostal. It's like a few rungs up from covering yourself in snakes.

LUCI

You poor thing. I have the usual hell and Catholic guilt.

Luci takes a bite of pizza.

TYSON

Fucking religion, man. It's kind of like cops.

LUCI

What do you mean?

TYSON

Like the only reason I listen to a cop or even have one modicum of respect for them isn't because they are good, decent people worthy of my respect or admiration. It's because of that city-sanctioned murder weapon hanging on the side of their hip. Hell is like religion's gun to me. If it weren't for the fear of hell constantly being paraded in your face, and people claiming they know what happens when you die, despite the fact no one could fucking know, I just don't think it would have the power it holds on us.

LUCI

So like if I told you "Tyson, tomorrow something terrible will happen to you at nine-thirty pm if you don't dunk yourself in the East River three times before." Even though you know I was full of shit, you may spend all day until nine-thirty nervously wondering: maybe I should have dunked myself?

TYSON

Exactly. And at nine-thirty it would be easy for me to debunk you.

LUCI

But if nine-thirty never comes, or there is no way for you to ever know what happens after nine-thirty, then (MORE)

LUCI (CONT'D)

I could lord over...

She nudges him given the word play.

Tyson smiles.

LUCI (CONT'D)

...your fear. Stuck in that unknowing middle ground. Never knowing the torture that may or may not happen to you at the claimed time. After a while I could maybe hold some power over you.

TYSON

Yeah, but stretch that time frame over a millenia or two, and I'd say you summed up religion.

A loud boom occurs outside. Tyson and Luci freeze and look at each other.

MAN (O.S.)

Ah! What the fuck!

WOMAN (O.S.)

Yo, it's just fireworks, calm yourself!

MAN (O.S.)

This city, I swear to God.

Luci and Tyson look out his window.

LUCI and TYSON POV

Fireworks off in the distance through the skyline.

LUCI

What are the fireworks for, you think?

TYSON

I have no idea. This city never seems to need a reason for them.

Luci remains staring out the window even though Tyson is back in the bed.

LUCI

My dad always liked fireworks.

She crawls back into the bed.

LUCI (CONT'D)

Ok. My dad for example: I have no

(MORE)

LUCI (CONT'D,)
idea, really where he is. He's in one of two places. For my mom, she believes because he was a practicing Catholic, his soul is living somewhere forever.

TYSON
Right. Heaven, hell, or what's the third?

LUCI
Purgatory. Don't get me started on that shit. So he's either there, or he's just in his coffin. And no one who's died can confirm or deny anything. But if there was a way to get to nine-thirty and truly know, then the power would be taken, right? The cop's gun on the side of the hip would be removed and given to the people.

TYSON
Oh man, if only.

LUCI
(wistfully) Yeah, if only.

TYSON
Well, I think we're getting pretty close to solving the ills of the world.

LUCI
Ha. Yeah. Just a couple more sessions like this, and we can call it a day.

The two try to smooch some more, but it's late, and they are exhausted.

LUCI
I'm thinking I'm beat.

TYSON
You can obviously stay here.

LUCI
Thanks, so can you.

The two get under the covers. As Tyson stares up at the ceiling Luci turns on her side. In this final moment of quiet she finally feels the flood of emotions, and starts to silently cry.

Tyson, not sure what to do eventually rolls over to spoon her. Lingering there for a moment he reaches over her to turn off the LIGHT on his nightstand.

FADE OUT

EXT. LOS ANGELES SKYLINE - DAY

Establishing shot.

Smoggy Los Angeles. Same shots from the first scene but with noticeable differences. The usual tall buildings, some new ones, no wall. It's not that far in the future yet.

CHILDREN'S MUSIC is playing loudly.

INT. LOS ANGELES LIVING ROOM - DAY

Establishing shot

The home of Luci and Tyson. Images on the walls and dressers showing different events with the passage of time.

A quaint abode filled with the stuff of a small family: photos, framed movie posters nobody has ever heard of, books and books on computer programming, and dreams. Unpaid hospital bills litter the table. Children's artwork lines the walls, a name (MELEE) scrawled in childish crayon on this and that.

A calendar hangs up with checked off dates. Everything is checked up to two days before a circled date. Inside the date in bold:

EMTECH DIGITAL CONFERENCE!!!!OMGOMG

A little GIRL sits coloring and coughing near where the music is playing. An OLD DOG lies sleeping next to her.

It's little MELEE, the Mexican/Black/White five year old child of Luci and Tyson.

LUCI (O.S.)
 Melee, can you turn that down a
 little, mija?

Melee coughs and looks up to where the voice is coming from.

MELEE

Ok, Mama.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

A well loved and often used kitchen.

A slightly older Tyson and Luci hustle and bustle in the kitchen. Tyson washes dishes while Luci tries to gather everything she might need for a trip. They are tired.

TYSON

Oh, before I forget. I boiled your tongue scraper that fell near the toilet.

LUCI

(slightly distracted) Thank you, honey. That's very sweet of you.

TYSON

I can recite you more poetry if you'd like.

She's in and out of the kitchen. Whatever is happening around her is not her priority. Her mind is elsewhere.

TYSON (CONT'D)

How are you feeling about the conference?

LUCI

I'm too exhausted, I think, to be nervous. We've been working like crazy and I just hope SAM doesn't fuck up the presentation.

TYSON

Why is Sam giving the presentation and not you?

LUCI

(agitated) Please, I don't need this right now. Are you good with Melee's appointment while I'm gone?

TYSON

(growing agitated) Yes. I think I canhandle her appointment. Thanks for checking up on me.

LUCI

(becoming angry) I'm not checking up on you, I just want to make sure everything is taken care of before I fucking leave, ok?

Luci is running around and clanking things.

TYSON

Why don't you.

Luci leaves the kitchen.

LUCI (O.S.)

I can hear you. I can do two things at once.

TYSON

(sarcastically and angrily at the dishes) Boy, standing here and washing dishes, How have I managed to accomplish these things? It's two things! I sure wish I was like my brilliant wife.

LUCI (O.S.)

Oh my god! I don't need you to be all sensitive right now. I need you to help me get out of here.

Tyson is about to blow up, but breathes.

TYSON

Melee will be fine. Fucking go to your conference.

Luci comes back in and stands in the entryway of the kitchen.

LUCI

Look, I'm not trying to start a fight right now, especially before I leave. I just want to make sure everything is fine while I'm gone.

Tyson is staring straight at the wall. He hardens, but then softens.

TYSON

(measured) I know you're under a lot stress and pressure right now. I appreciate your hard work. I'm trying to help. I don't want you snapping at me, please.

She begins to protest but needs to leave.

LUCI

(strained) I'm sorry.

TYSON

I'm sorry I got grumpy, too.

MELEE (O.S.)

Mama! Look at my drawing!

Luci goes to see what she's doing.

INT. LOS ANGELES LIVING ROOM - DAY

Melee stands holding up the picture. It's a crude version of Luci sitting at a computer with a terrible drawing of the Golden Gate Bridge. It's absolute garbage a child could draw. Because a child did draw it.

LUCI

Baby, that looks great!

Melee coughs and smiles, pleased with herself.

LUCI

Mama is going to miss you so much while she's gone. Can I get a smooch?

They smooch while Tyson enters the room. He wants to see the picture too, but the moment has passed.

The family share hugs and kisses, as Luci heads out the door with her bags.

LUCI

I'll call as soon as I land in San Francisco. Be good, and don't get into trouble. I love you!

EXT. LOS ANGELES HOME - DAY

Melee waves to Luci while coughing more and more, with Tyson and Luci sharing concerned glances they hope she doesn't catch.

Luci gets into an SUV with a driver and is driven away. Classical music heard from within the car. She allows herself a brief moment to look at her family standing in the doorway.

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ACT III

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Black and white, noir style.

Establishing shot.

A dive-y room with booze and chairs.

Closing time. A couple of BARFLIES get up to leave while the BARTENDER washes up the last of the glasses.

A lone, GRIZZLED MAN occupies the last seat at the bar. Head down in thought.

The BARTENDER wipes his hands, and waves at the BARFLIES leaving.

BARTENDER

Have a great night, guys.

BARFLY 1

You too.

BARFLY 2

Thanks for everything, man.

The bartender begins counting the till. He casually addresses the only MAN left in the room.

BARTENDER

Alright, bud. You mind settling up?

The GRIZZLED MAN sits quietly as if he didn't hear the bartender.

BARTENDER

Hey, I'm closing up here, pal. Can we settle up? How do you wanna to pay for this?

The GRIZZLED MAN slowly looks up, haunted, sad eyes staring at the BARTENDER.

GRIZZLED MAN

(in the graveliest voice on planet gravel) Put it on my TAB.

The BARTENDER looks down at what is on the bar.

There on the bar sits a bright PINK CAN of TAB. A stark difference to the black and white world.

The BARTENDER and the GRIZZLED MAN just silently trade glares.

SUPER: Tab. It's Still Around.

END COMMERCIAL

INT. SAN FRANCISCO MCMANSION - DAY

Establishing shot.

Classical music is playing. The city skyline we know and love is seen through the floor-to-ceiling windows with burgeoning unfamiliar new buildings sprouting up. It's a well decorated home.

The enormous flat screen television playing the Tab commercial illuminates the DRUNK MAN (GRAHAM 50s) half lying on his couch, glassy-eyed in the fabricated darkness of his viewing room.

The NEWS begins shortly after the commercial, read by a MALE (30s).

REPORTER (O.S.)

Good afternoon, San Francisco, and thank you for joining us. It's that time again. The EmTech Digital Conference has come back to the city. Showcasing the world's boldest and brightest in cutting edge AI, Tech, and all things future.

The walls are adorned with the drunk man's accolades.

Magazine covers saying things like: "30 under 30" with him looking younger on the cover, "The Brilliant New Entrepreneur GRAHAM ODIN DAVIS does it again." Clearly he's accomplished.

Pills, bottles, and cocaine are strewn about near him. So is a RAZOR.

REPORTER (O.S.)

We take you now to our Tech Correspondent MILES POWERS who's standing by right now at the St. Regis Hotel, where things are about
(MORE)

REPORTER (O.S. CONT'D)
to kick off. Miles?

Something dings. A notification on Graham's phone. His name was mentioned in an article somewhere.

ON SCREEN

...unlike Graham Davis, the former innovator turned washed up..

Graham looks up and back to the screen, just defeated.

GRAHAM POV

The badge for the ETDC that says GRAHAM DAVIS and the RAZOR sitting on his gaudy coffee table next to white powder.

MILES (O.S.)

Thanks, Chuck. I'm here at the St. Regis Hotel where the excitement has been building to a fever pitch. San Francisco has always been a hub for exciting new talent, and this year is no exception.

Another ding with more news of his name mentioned.

ON SCREEN

...the next Graham Davis, though let's hope this young upstart has a much longer career than the failed....

MILES (O.S. CONT'D)

Companies like NOCTURNS the purveyors of the unconscious led by tech magnate SAM O'HARA as well as USE A HOE.

Taking another swig of booze Graham picks up the razor, letting it graze lightly over his exposed arm, near the ULNER ARTERY.

MILES (O.S. CONT'D)

I'm sorry, wait, yes, I believe I'm saying that right, Use A Hoe, the viral self-styled "Contracting firm of the future" headed up by developer MOONA WILDE, are expecting big turn outs here in Hall H, promising huge
(MORE)

MILES (O.S. CONT'D)
returns for investors.

Graham looks up from his arm, opting instead to use the razor for the uppers on his table.

MILES (O.S. CONT'D)
Back to you guys in the studio, Chuck.

Grabbing the badge he heads towards the door and out in the the starkly different bright fog of San Francisco.

CHUCK THE REPORTER (O.S.)
Thanks, Miles and now whether you like it or not: the weather.

EXT. ST. REGIS HOTEL - DAY

Establishing shot

The glory and the majesty of the St. Regis Hotel during a Tech Conference.

Cars pull up with folks believing wholeheartedly they are contributing positively to the world at large. Hand shakes are exchanged, sunglasses removed.

INT. ST REGIS HOTEL 6TH FLOOR - DAY

Establishing shot

White men everywhere. Badges everywhere. Women and People of Color are outnumbered. More hair gel than you can shake a stick at, as well as the most unkempt folks imaginable. Tables and booths pepper the rooms.

INT. ST REGIS HOTEL 6TH FLOOR - HALL H - DAY

Establishing shot

Seats lined up ready for a large presentation.

Graham, avoids eye contact with most of the folks filtering into the hall. He's singularly focused.

The MC (MALE 20s) gets the capacity crowd hyped up.

MC
Good afternoon, Hall H!

The crowd yells indistinguishable crowd excitement.

MC (CONT'D)
Good Afternoon, World!

The crowd shouts even more.

INT. HALL H BACKSTAGE - DAY

Luci paces nervously in the backstage of the large hall.

SAM (WHITE MALE LATE 30s) goes over his notes on his PHONE before the presentation.

MC (O.S.CONT'D)
Boy, am I so excited to be here on this historic event. In these very halls, the future of the world takes shape. And you are its architects!

More crowd cheering.

LUCI
(to Sam) You have everything you need?
Slides, cues.

SAM
(agitated) Fuck, Luci. YES. I have everything. You're really getting me out of the zone.

Luci stares at him annoyed at this condescension.

MC (O.S.CONT'D)
Ok, I don't want to waste any more of your time. Let's get to it.

MC (O.S.CONT'D)
Coming up to the stage, creator of Nocturns and the TRIPLE ZED data patch: Sam O'Hara!

SAM
Fuck. That's me. Luci, Hold my shit.

Sam quickly gives Luci his PHONE and coffee and heads to the stage.

The crowd erupts in thunderous applause as Sam strolls onto the stage.

Luci looks on from below the ramp as he ascends.

Sam's phone vibrates and lights up revealing a message that Luci can't help but read.

Her brows furrow. What she is reading is unpleasant.

LUCI

(Whispering to herself) What the actual fuck.

SAM (O.S.)

Hello hello hello, San Francisco! So exciting to be here and share our latest breakthroughs with you.

INT. HALL H STAGE - DAY

Sam is giving a TED TALK style speech. On his wrist is a bracelet style watch with two rings that attach to his middle and ring finger. On his head a tiny little microphone.

SAM

We here at Nocturns have been working hard to bring something that until now, has always just been just beyond the periphery of our minds.

A giant screen lights up behind him.

ON SCREEN

A crystal clear image of a scene in which a person walks the halls of a school naked. Different, unnatural angles occur with shifts from POV to third person.

The crowd delivers a rustling of chuckles.

SAM

(Faking embarrassment) Oh, my. We've all be there haven't we? What a nightmare.

Sam begins walking around the stage.

SAM (CONT'D)

In this case, this is someone's literal nightmare. This image was recorded live 4 weeks ago from VOLUNTEER 427. Pulled directly from his mind while he dreamed in real (MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)
time, wearing this device right here.

He points to the watch and ring adorning his wrist and fingers. Audible gasps are heard from the crowd.

SAM (CONT'D)
That's right, folks. We've captured
dreams.

The whole thing lasts for about one minute before changing to the next batch of dreams.

INT. BACKSTAGE HALL H - DAY

Luci is reading the texts on Sam's phone.

SAM (O.S. CONT'D)
Imagine what he could have learned if
Freud had had unfettered access to the
dreams of his patients.

ON SCREEN

DAN

... Whose giving the talk?

ME

Luci wanted to give the presentation. She asked, actually, but can you imagine if we did that? I'm not racist, but having a Mexican front and center would cause investors to shit a burrito, if you know what I'm saying.

DAN

Haha True dat.

ME

It's not a good look.

SAM (O.S. CONT'D)
Imagine the social media content
literally generated in your sleep.
Compare dreams with your friends and
family.

Luci is visibly upset but holding it together.

SAM (O.S. CONT'D)

Or consider the marketing capabilities
for our corporate friends and data
that could be mined if we truly knew
what people wanted deep down.

INT. HALL H - DAY

The crowd is wowed by the imagery of different dreams
onscreen, and the possibilities it brings.

Graham, however is searching the stage for something that
isn't there, and catches a little glimpse of Luci in the back
pacing, and looking upset.

He searches the pamphlet and takes a swig of whiskey from his
tiny flask.

INT. ST REGIS HOTEL 6TH FLOOR - NIGHT

Establishing shot

Folks with lanyards everywhere, enjoying cocktails and
networking.

Luci separates herself a little from her cohort upon the
recent text exchange revelation.

She watches as Sam talks with interested investors. Their
body language excludes her from being able to join in.
Clearly it's a boy's club. And a white boy's club by the
looks of it.

She sips her drink and contemplates.

Graham moves like a shark upon seeing Luci alone. He's
feeling good and confident thanks to the liquid courage he's
imbibed. Also, thanks to the social dynamics, he has no
problem speaking to her privately.

GRAHAM

You're Luci Luz, right? From Nocturns?

Graham extends his hand to her with a smile. She's taken
aback, and surprised anyone recognizes her.

LUCI

Yes? That's me.

GRAHAM

I'm Graham Davis. You don't know me, but I really admire your work. I've been watching it develop over the years.

LUCI

Thanks. I'm surprised your not waiting in line to talk to Sam.

GRAHAM

I'm not a fan of lines, and I don't believe in misdirecting credit where credit is due.

Luci listens more, figuring out the angle here.

Graham is getting slightly more excited now.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

You're the developer of the Triple Zed patch, right? The program that allows the image generation between the space of REM and Delta Wave sleep!

LUCI

(smiling) Yeah, that's my baby. All that stuff you saw was spawned from my program. But how did you know?

GRAHAM

Do you know why the klepto did so poorly at the pun contest?

Luci just stares because he didn't answer her question, and he's clearly inebriated, but so is everyone else.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

Because he kept taking everything literally.

Graham points down at Luci's socks.

She looks to where he's pointing.

CU on her socks

"Darn It, This Socks"

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

The patch you created is called Triple Zed. Three Z's? ZZZ. And you work for a dream company? Your word nerd badge is worn a little lower, but it's there.

LUCI

You gotta put private jokes where you can, or you'll lose your mind.

Graham takes a sip from his cocktail.

GRAHAM

(smiling) So your dream job isn't the dream job?

LUCI

I thought it was. And the work is interesting, but sometime I feel like it could go deeper, or like I'm not always used to my full potential.

GRAHAM

You ever think about leaving?

Luci looks over at Sam and her coworkers.

LUCI

Are you poaching me?

GRAHAM

What do you think folks like me are doing? You put yourself up on the block, and we bid. Sharks smell the chum and we go for what we want.

LUCI

Well, I don't know you, or what you do. Are you a venture capitalist, a technophile, did you miss your exit for the Furry convention?

GRAHAM

A fair question. A quick online search will tell you that I was one of the youngest and most successful entrepreneurs no one has ever heard of.

Luci looks at his objectively not young face. He sees this.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

A further search will reveal that I had a fall from great heights, much to the relish of my contemporaries, and much to my chagrin.

LUCI

What happened?

GRAHAM

My fall can be blamed on the same thing as my success: Very hard work mixed with luck. In the first case good luck, the second case bad. But I'm giving it one last hurrah before I sail away into permanent obscurity. I mean, retirement.

Luci listens intently, takes a large sip of her cocktail.

LUCI

Why me? Why not someone like Sam?

GRAHAM

A brilliant mind, Sam is not. He's a salesman, definitely. I know a shiny talking turd when I see one, and I know he isn't the brains of this operation.

Luci warms up a little to this taking down a few pegs of her newly minted oppressor.

LUCI

So are you a shining, talking turd?

GRAHAM

Oh, I'm one of the shiniest. But I'm smart enough to recognize talent, and wise enough to treat that talent with the respect and dignity it deserves. If that fool had any sense he'd put you front and center.

LUCI

I appreciate your candor, but what if I don't want that kind of attention?

Graham takes a moment to look at Luci. It lingers just shy of too long. It's a serious look at first, but then softens.

GRAHAM

You know, it is hot under the spotlight. The board room is much more temperate, I'd say. I'd give you a voice rather than slide my way to the top lubricated by the sweat of your brow.

Luci tilts her head to take in Graham. Not sure what to make of him.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)

Let me steal a little bit more of your precious time. What I've been developing with other minds like yourself will change the world. It sounds like grand standing bullshit, I know, but let me tell you my idea, and how integral you are to that vision. Your life will change like you've never expected.

Luci thinks and looks at him in his eyes.

LUCI

That sounds ominous as fuck, Graham.

Graham laughs.

GRAHAM

What's that Eleanor Roosevelt quote?
"Do one thing every day that scares you"?

Luci is faux impressed.

LUCI

Woah, quoting Eleanor are we? I have another one for you: "A woman is like a tea bag; you never know how strong it is until it's in hot water."

Graham nods in respect.

GRAHAM

Noted. Now, can I get you one of these free drinks?

LUCI
Wow, the benefits are rolling in
already!

The two head to the bar.

INT. LA PEDIATRICIAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Establishing shot

A brightly decorated office with kid friendly health messages, and things to make children feel at ease.

Tyson sits in a chair filling out paperwork as Melee plays with one of the numerous toys in the waiting room, coughing occasionally.

MEDICAL ASSISTANT (O.S)
Melee Luz-Freeman?

Tyson looks up from his paperwork.

TYSON
(to Melee) Come on baby, it's time to
see the doctor.

Melee hops up and runs to Tyson. They hold hands and meet the MEDICAL ASSISTANT.

TYSON
(to medical assistant) How's your day
going?

MEDICAL ASSISTANT
I can't complain.

TYSON
They don't let you?

The medical assistant gives a polite chuckle and leads them to DR. SONJA SINGH'S office.

INT. DR SONJA SINGH'S OFFICE

Establishing shot

A brightly lit doctor's office.

Dr Sonja Singh (INDIAN FEMALE late 40s) gets up and shakes Tyson and Melee's hands before having Melee play out in the children's waiting area just outside of her office.

She leads Tyson into her office.

Once inside, the sound of construction and banging can be heard beyond the wall.

DR. SINGH

You can have a seat right there, Mr. Freeman. I apologize about the noise. We're expanding so please "pardon our dust" as they say.

She smiles limply and Tyson sits, growing slightly uneasy.

Dr. Singh sits for some time looking at a piece of paper while Tyson sits dumbly in his chair.

The sounds of construction and some light, muffled talking can be heard behind the wall.

DR. SINGH (CONT'D)

Thank you for coming in. I've been taking a look at Melee's lab results. I know she's been having issues with a cough, and some lethargy. As you know we initially thought it was bronchiolitis, then possible pneumonia.

TYSON

Yeah, I remember.

Dr. Singh looks down at her notes. A table saw is being used somewhere. As well as a constant banging.

Another moment that feels almost too long.

DR. SINGH

Upon closer inspection there is something more going on, and I hate to admit that we aren't exactly sure what it is, but it is very serious, and so we are taking a serious look at it.

Tyson is growing more agitated in his chair.

TYSON

Oh.

The sound of a very loud and deep thud.

SMASH CUT

INT. KARAOKE BAR - NIGHT [DREAM SEQUENCE]

A dark karaoke bar. It's performance time, and Tyson has a song he wants to sing.

The sound has been sucked out of the room for everything but footsteps.

Melee sits coloring on the high bar stools at the bar.

Tyson is walking to the DJ (DR SINGH IN A PSEUDO HIP OUTFIT) with a piece of paper that has the song he wants on it.

The doctor's VO continues in a very muffled space, completely impossible to hear.

He smiles, sliding the PAPER on the DJ booth. The song he has requested:

CU on the paper

Father and Daughter Forever and Ever (Gonna Live a Long Time)

DJ SINGH looks at the paper, gives a nod and searches on her computer smiling the entire time, headphones on one ear.

She hands Tyson the mic.

With the crowded bar's undivided attention Tyson stands before the large screen, mic in hand looking up waiting for the bouncing ball with the words.

Melee looks at her father proudly.

This entire scene has been silent until now.

The song begins. It is the most metal song blasting to deafening levels.

Tyson stands smiling at first, then confused and scared.

The ball bounces over the SUPERS to the song on the big screen with Tyson silhouetted in front of it.

The stock karaoke imagery is Tyson in the doctor's chair with cuts of a METAL BAND with long hair, black and white KISS-style face paint on.

The words are what Tyson imagines the doctor saying. He doesn't know this song.

ON SCREEN and SUNG in a guttural demon growl:

Test results are in.

We don't know what is wrong.

Nothing we can do.

Maybe it's cancer.

Hoping for the best, but expecting the worst.

Your child is going to die.

(Unintelligible Words)

Tyson turns and is nervously looking around.

Melee is oblivious to what is happening, and cheering for her father.

DR. SINGH (V.O.)
Mr. Freeman? Mr. Freeman?

SMASH CUT

INT. LA PEDIATRICIAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Tyson snaps back to reality. All sound is normal.

He's alone with Dr. Singh and the sounds of construction.

INTERCUT between LUCI & GRAHAM and TYSON & DR. SINGH

Luci and Graham are having drinks, and he is explaining to her his idea, asking her what she thinks.

Tyson sits listening to Dr. Singh.

DR. SINGH

Now I know this is a lot to take in.
And we're here for you if you have any
questions. These next few bits are
important to take note. I'd send

DR. SINGH (CONT'D)

along a packet, but like I said, this
is new for us as well.

The metal music swells and as Dr Singh's mouths more the metal band appears wearing construction equipment, breaking through the walls singing more lyrics which match up with what Dr. Singh occasionally says.

The ball bouncing over the SUPERS picks up again this time bouncing in the office setting.

METAL BAND

Your child will die. Maybe within the year, maybe within seven years. We'll do our best.

Luci and Graham are laughing and hitting it off. Body language between the two has changed, and even some other folks have joined with them.

The band demolishes the desk taking a jackhammer to it.

Wind picks up and even drowns out the music.

Sam and his posse are shooting dirty glances over at Luci who is sitting with Graham.

Young Tyson (8) from the church scene now occupies the seat. He is out of his element, and sweating.

The music is reaching a crescendo.

METAL BAND

What are you gonna do? What are you gonna do? What are you gonna do?

Graham and Luci are winding down. He hands her his card with his name on it.

Melee colors in the other room an image of her father in the seat being strong.

Young Tyson is welling up with tears.

METAL BAND (O.S.)

Hey fuckhead, what are you gonna do?
What are you gonna god damn doooooo?

Luci looks up as Graham slides the car with his info up. She's in a moment of choice here.

Music is at its maximum peak here.

On the front of Graham's card is the image we've seen several times in the beginning. A crude, less polished version of what we saw at the beginning, but unmistakable:

CU on card

HVN

CUT TO BLACK

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