

The End of Heartache

by

Marty Chartrand

OVER BLACK:

Hard thuds accompanied by heavy breaths.

FADE IN:

EXT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

A tightly closed fist slams against an old, grayed concrete wall -- sending mortar dust into the air.

Another fist strikes. And another.

Left, right. Left, right. Relentless punches. Powerful punches.

TOMMY, 30, rough yet handsome; snarls as he hammers away on the wall.

MAN (O.S.)
Okay, Tommy. You're up.

Tommy slows his punches.

He stops and takes in a deep breath before he lets out one last fury of punches.

INT. WAREHOUSE, GROUND FLOOR - DAY

A dingy, dim-lit building. Dark walls, no windows, and concrete floors.

CHEERS and BOOS ring out inside the walls.

A **CROWD** gathered in a circle, forms what will be known as,

THE PIT.

A palace for the bare-knuckled brawlers who occupy it.

INT. THE PIT - DAY

The crowd watches Tommy pound away on his much larger, **TATTOOED OPPONENT.**

Tommy delivers blow after blow to the man's face before he drops down to the cold concrete floor.

Tommy mounts on top of the man and continues to rain down punches upon him.

The **REFEREE** intervenes and pulls Tommy off of his tattooed opponent.

REFEREE

Alright, Tommy. That's enough. I said that's enough.

Tommy stands alone. Victorious and unscathed.

His opponent lays on his back. Bloodied and beaten.

The crowd roars.

CROWD

(chanting)

Tommy. Tommy. Tommy. Tommy.

The referee raises Tommy's hand in victory.

Tommy scans the crowd as they cheer him on.

Tommy smiles. He loves this shit.

INT. TRAIN STATION, PLATFORM - NIGHT

Tommy leans against the graffiti-plagued concrete wall as he awaits his train to arrive.

INT. TRAIN - NIGHT

As the train takes off, Tommy stares out his window.

Bright lights. A city filled with hopes and dreams.

INT. HOUSE, FOYER - NIGHT

Tommy enters his two-bedroom dwelling and is immediately greeted by LUCY, 6, cute as a button.

LUCY

Daddy's home.

Tommy bends down and scoops Lucy up into his arms.

TOMMY

Hi, baby.

LUCY

Hi, Daddy.

A **WOMAN** pops her head in from the other room.

This is **SHEILA**, 55; warm smile, weathered eyes.

SHEILA
Dinner's ready.

INT. HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Tommy, Lucy, and Sheila share a meal.

Lucy notices the bruises and scraps on Tommy's hands.

She rubs one of her little fingers across the marks on his knuckles.

LUCY
Does it hurt?

Tommy places his hand over Lucy's and sweetly kisses the top of her head.

TOMMY
No, baby.

Tommy gives Lucy a smile.

TOMMY
Keep eating.

And Lucy does.

Tommy locks eyes with Sheila who lowers her head and continues to eat.

INT. HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT - LATER

Sheila washes dishes as Tommy and Lucy clear the table.

Tommy spots a business card pinned to the refrigerator.

We read its words.

Dr. Robert Thomas

Grievance Counselor

Tommy snatches it and tosses it into a nearby drawer.

TOMMY
(trying to keep his voice
down)
Stop leaving that up there. She's
starting to read now you know?

SHEILA
 (equally trying to keep
 her voice down)
 You're getting worse, Tommy. This
 isn't like the last time.

TOMMY
 I got it under control.

SHEILA
 It's been nearly seven years now.

TOMMY
 I know damn well how many years
 it's been.

SHEILA
 It would only be temporary. Just
 enough time for the doctors to get
 you right again.

Tommy slams his fist down onto the counter-top -- startling
 both Sheila and Lucy.

TOMMY
 No. End of discussion.

As Tommy storms off, Sheila locks eyes with Lucy who
 innocently shrugs her shoulders.

Sheila gives Lucy a small smile and begins to wash the dishes
 again.

INT. HOUSE, BATHROOM - NIGHT

Lucy stands on a stool and brushes her teeth as Tommy brushes
 his.

She smiles as she brushes. So does Tommy.

INT. HOUSE, LUCY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tommy brushes Lucy's hair. He's actually rather good at it.

LUCY
 Daddy?

TOMMY
 Yeah, baby?

LUCY
 Can we visit Mommy tomorrow?

TOMMY
 Sure, baby. I think Mom would love
 that.

Lucy smiles.

Tommy stops brushing.

TOMMY
 Okay. Time for bed.

Lucy hops into bed and Tommy pulls the covers over top of
 her.

Tommy gently kisses Lucy's forehead and turns out the lights.

INT. HOUSE, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Tommy closes the door and rests his head against it.

INT. HOUSE, BASEMENT - NIGHT - LATER

Tommy pounds away on a punching bag.

No gloves for Tommy, just his bare hands.

Tommy's cuts from earlier grow larger and deeper with each
 punch that lands.

He stares straight ahead. He's locked in.

INT. HOSPITAL, EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

A **WOMAN**, 24, screams out in agony.

A **DOCTOR** and her team of **NURSES** move in to assess the
 situation.

DOCTOR
 (frantic)
 How far along is she?

NURSE
 (equally frantic)
 Thirty-eight weeks.

The doctor moves the woman's dress up to reveal her bulging,
 bleeding stomach.

DOCTOR

Okay. We have a knife wound.
Roughly two point five centimeters
in diameter to the lower, right
portion of her abdomen. Possible
organ damage to the large
intestine. Let's get her prepped
for surgery.

The woman's body begins to violently shake.

Her arms and legs jerk from side to side.

Her head trusts back as foam oozes from her mouth.

The group of nurses move in to help.

In the corner of the room is Tommy. Bloodied and bruised.
Watching on in horror.

The doctor notices Tommy.

DOCTOR

Get him out of here.

A nurse grabs Tommy and escorts him out of the room.

The vitals on the machine plummet.

DOCTOR

We're losing her.

INT. HOUSE, BASEMENT - NIGHT

Tommy is no longer punching the bag.

Tommy is hugging the bag. Sobbing. Tears meeting sweat.

TOMMY

Goddammit, Tommy. Pull it together.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

A blanket covers the freshly cut grass.

A basket rests upon it accompanied by a singled red rose.

Tommy sits and watches on as Lucy practices her cartwheels in
front of a tombstone.

After a few more tumbles, Tommy stands up.

TOMMY

Okay, baby. Times up.

Lucy grabs the rose and runs to the tombstone.

She plants a kiss upon it and rests the rose against the tombstone.

LUCY

Bye, Mommy. I'll see you soon.

Tommy looks towards the words engraved upon the stone.

March 2, 1988 - April 16, 2012

Here lies Megan Grant.

Mother. Wife. Daughter.

Until we meet again.

The rage inside Tommy's eyes burns on.

INT. THE PIT - NIGHT

Tommy rocks a swollen right eye courtesy of his **TRUCKER OPPONENT**. The trucker isn't fairing too well either.

The crowd roars on the two men beating the piss out of one another.

Tommy swings with a sloppy overhand right.

The trucker ducks it and his bloodied fist meets the side of Tommy's face and cuts him deep.

Blood oozes down Tommy's cheek.

He takes a swipe to assess the damage. He sees blood. Lots of it.

Tommy snaps.

He head-butts his opponent. Dropping him down to his knees.

The trucker's nose breaks instantly. A steady red river flows over his lips and down his chin.

The trucker looks back up to see a knee approaching his eyes -- Tommy's.

BLACK:

FADE IN:

INT. WAREHOUSE, GROUND FLOOR - NIGHT - LATER

Tommy's opponent is being tended to by the makeshift **MEDICAL STAFF**.

Tommy sits. His knees jiggling a mile a minute.

The **PROMOTER** approaches. This is **DWIGHT**, 60, always in a bad mood and tonight is no exception.

PROMOTER

That's the last goddamn time. You hear me?

Tommy nods.

TOMMY

Look, Dwight. I'm really sorry.

PROMOTER

Save it, kid. You're done here. Get the hell out of my sight.

INT. TRAIN STATION, PLATFORM - NIGHT

Tommy boards the train.

INT. TRAIN - NIGHT

Tommy watches out the window as the world quickly rushes by him.

INT. HOUSE, BATHROOM - NIGHT

Tommy stares at the mirror. Anger with the reflection he sees.

He looks down at a pill bottle.

We read its words.

Zoloft

Take one pill daily.

Tommy scoops up the bottle and pulls out four pills. Shoves them into his mouth and down his throat.

He slams the bottle down.

INT. HOUSE, LUCY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tommy sits next to Lucy as she sleeps.

He watches her. A resting angel.

Tommy softly kisses her forehead.

INT. HOUSE, BASEMENT - NIGHT

Tommy channels his anger upon the punching bag.

The bag sways back and forth with each of Tommy's strikes.

INT. HOSPITAL, SURGERY ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

A machine red-lines.

The doctor and her team perform CPR on Megan.

Thrusts to Megan's chest. Oxygen pumped into her lungs.

All hands on deck as the **SURGEON** jumps in to help.

The entire medical staff tries frantically to get a pulse back.

The surgeon looks at the machine. It's still red-lined.

A moment feels like an eternity.

The surgeon stops his actions.

The nurses follow.

The doctor looks up to see her team stopped.

SURGEON
Make the call.

DOCTOR
No. Not yet.

The doctor goes back to pumping Megan's chest.

The surgeon gets in between Megan and the doctor. Stopping her from continuing CPR.

The doctor reluctantly stops and looks up for the surgeon.

Sad eyes reflect sad eyes.

SURGEON

I know.

The doctor takes a deep breath.

SURGEON

Make the call.

Her moment of weakness ends. The doctor nods.

She looks at her watch.

DOCTOR

Time of death. Twenty-three, fifty.

INT. HOUSE, BASEMENT - NIGHT

Tommy screams as he pounds away onto the bag.

The bag sways more and more rapidly. Every retreat of the bag met with a new advance.

INT. HOSPITAL, SURGERY ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

The doctor leaves the room.

The surgeon and the nurses follow.

Megan's lifeless body rests upon the operating table.

INT. HOUSE, BASEMENT - NIGHT

Tommy continues to punch as the bag opens up. Spilling its contents.

Tommy rushes over to a nearby shelve and knocks it over.

Falling paint cans are forced open as they crash upon the floor.

Tommy moves onto the next thing he can destroy.

LUCY

Daddy?

Tommy turns around to find Lucy standing on the staircase. Shaken by her fathers fit of rage.

TOMMY

What are you doing up? Get back to bed!

Lucy begins to cry.

Tommy moves to her.

TOMMY

Oh, baby.

Lucy rushes off.

Tommy is left to himself and begins to repeatedly slam his fist against his face.

TOMMY

Stupid. Stupid. Stupid.

INT. HOUSE, BATHROOM - DAY

Tommy showers. He concentrates on his breathing.

He takes in a breath deeply and lets it out slowly.

INT. HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Lucy and Sheila laugh as they eat at the table.

Both stop when Tommy enters.

Tommy goes to kiss Lucy who meets him with resistance. Pulling back away from Tommy.

Tommy stops his advancement and walks out.

INT. TRAIN STATION, PLATFORM - DAY

Tommy paces back and forth as he waits for the train to arrive.

He takes out his pill bottle, shoves a handful of pills into his mouth.

INT. TRAIN - DAY

Tommy rests his head back and closes his eyes. Tightly.

INT. WAREHOUSE, GROUND FLOOR - DAY

Tommy approaches Dwight as he sets up for tonight's fights.

Dwight sees Tommy and begins to walk away.

TOMMY
Dwight. Wait up.

DWIGHT
I told you that you were done here.

TOMMY
I know. I just need a minute.

DWIGHT
I don't have time for this shit
right now kid.

TOMMY
I need to fight.

DWIGHT
Ha. After that shit you pulled the
other night, you're lucky I didn't
kick your ass myself.

TOMMY
I don't think you understand. I
need to fight.

Dwight stops walking and looks at Tommy.

TOMMY
I'm begging you, Dwight.

Dwight looks Tommy in the eyes. Sees his hurt. Feels bad for him if only just a little.

TOMMY
One last time.

Dwight thinks about it for a moment.

TOMMY
Please.

DWIGHT
Win, lose or draw?

Tommy nods his head.

DWIGHT
I swear kid. You make me regret
this decision.

TOMMY
I won't.

DWIGHT
Go get ready. You're on at nine.

TOMMY
Thank you.

DWIGHT
Don't thank me. You got Tank
tonight.

Tommy grins.

INT. THE PIT - NIGHT

Tommy and his muscular opponent, **TANK**, advance and retreat as they circle around one another.

Two men trying to find a weakness.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

A high-class establishment.

Tommy stares out at the beautiful woman in front of him.

This is MEGAN, 24, ageless beauty.

Megan laughs out loud.

PATRONS turn and give Megan disgusted looks.

Megan notices and calms up.

Tommy shoots her a smile. Megan gives him one back.

Two people enjoying each other's company. Enjoying life. So in love.

INT. THE PIT - NIGHT

Tommy strikes first. A quick jab to his opponent's face.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Megan wraps her arm around Tommy's as they walk along.

We can see all of Megan now. We key onto her belly. Megan is pregnant. Very pregnant.

MEGAN
How much further?

TOMMY
Not too much.

Tommy notices Megan is nearly out of breath. He stops her.

TOMMY
Hey. Are you okay?

MEGAN
Yeah. I think so.

She takes another step and immediately has to stop again.

She grabs at her belly.

MEGAN
Actually no.

She smiles a painful smile.

MEGAN
I think it's time.

Tommy lights up.

TOMMY
Time? Like time, time?

Megan nods.

MEGAN
Mmhmm. Baby time.

Tommy smiles.

TOMMY
Okay. Let's take the alley. It's faster.

MEGAN
No. It's dark. Are you sure?

TOMMY

Yes. Look at me. Don't be scared.
You're with me.

Megan thinks for a moment.

TOMMY

Come on. Let's go.

Tommy starts to pull Megan towards the alley. Megan stops struggling and follows.

INT. THE PIT - NIGHT

Tank counters with a strike of his own. A powerful one that staggers Tommy.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

It's dark and just as shitty as you'd expect.

Tommy and Megan walk on.

A **THUG** pops out from a doorway.

Another **TALL THUG** blocks the exit.

Tommy and Megan stop.

They turn to look to where they came from.

Two other **MUSCULAR THUGS** are blocking that escape.

MEGAN

Tommy?

Tommy turns to Megan and grabs her by the face. Trying to make his next message as clear as possible.

TOMMY

Whatever happens next, you run. Do
you hear me? You run.

Megan nods.

The group of thugs close in on Tommy and Megan.

Three of them grab Tommy and begin to punch him down to the ground.

He tries to cover up but the kicks are coming from every angle.

TOMMY

Run!

Megan tries to run but is grabbed right away.

Tommy tries to get to his feet but is dropped with every hit.

Megan sobs as the **THUG LEADER** has a hold of her.

THUG LEADER

Money. Now. Everything you've got.

MEGAN

Please, no. I don't have anything.

The leader pulls out a switchblade and places it against Megan's throat.

THUG LEADER

Don't lie to me bitch.

Megan cries.

MEGAN

I'm not lying. I swear.

The leader looks Megan over. The knife's blade following his eyes.

THUG LEADER

If you don't have money, maybe I'll take something else.

Megan looks over towards Tommy who is looking right at Megan.

MEGAN

(crying)

Please help me.

Tommy's slips in and out on consciousness from the beating.

The leader grins as the knife finds its way down to Megan's belly.

Megan drives her knee up into the leader's crotch and makes a run for it.

The leader chases after Megan.

He catches up to her and grabs a hold of her.

MEGAN

Tommy!

The leader plunges the blade into Megan's belly.

TOMMY

No!

Tommy watches on in horror as Megan falls to the ground. Bleeding out.

The thugs run off.

Tommy drags himself to Megan.

TOMMY

Help! Somebody! I need help!

Tommy holds Megan in his lap as she fights for breath.

TOMMY

Stay with me, Megan. Stay with me, baby. Help! Please! I need help!

INT. THE PIT - NIGHT

Tommy hits Tank with punch after punch.

Tommy's breaths become deeper and more frantic.

INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Tommy and Sheila sit. Anxiously awaiting news. Any news.

The doctor enters and shakes her head.

Sheila breaks down immediately.

The doctor leaves and Tommy tries to comfort Sheila.

Sheila slaps Tommy hard across his face before she storms off.

Tommy turns and peers into the,

INT. HOSPITAL, NURSERY - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

A row of newborn babies.

We key onto one in pink.

We read the baby's name tag.

Lucy.

INT. THE PIT - NIGHT

Tommy drops his fists. He gazes straight ahead.

He's lost focus. So much so that he doesn't see the overhand right coming his way.

Tank's fist connects and Tommy drops to the concrete.

He lays motionless. Looking out towards the crowd as they motion for Tommy to get up.

He closes his eyes and we fade to,

BLACK:

FADE IN:

INT. TRAIN - NIGHT

Tommy sits.

He looks over his hands. The cuts. The bruises.

He catches a glimpse of himself in the window. His swollen, black and blued eyes. His well-broken nose.

Disappointed with what he sees, he turns away.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Tommy walks the front steps and reaches for the door.

He stops and turns around.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Tommy walks the streets. Nothing good is awake these hours of the night.

EXT. RIVERFRONT - NIGHT - LATER

Tommy finds a bench and takes a seat.

He watches dusk become dawn.

INT. HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Tommy enters.

Sheila looks worried.

SHEILA

You didn't come home last night?

Tommy doesn't respond. He reaches for a drawer, grabs the business card from earlier and b-lines towards the,

INT. HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Tommy sits down on the couch.

He places his palms upon his forehead, bends over and begins to openly weep.

Lucy runs in and hugs onto Tommy.

TOMMY

I'm sorry, baby.

Sheila sits down next to Tommy and Lucy.

TOMMY

I miss her so much.

SHEILA

I know. I do too.

TOMMY

I can't get her out of my head.
That night. The memories of it. I
can't get it to go away.

SHEILA

I know.

Sheila puts her arms around Tommy.

SHEILA

Everything's going to be okay.

Tommy looks up and nods. He hands her the business card.

TOMMY

Just temporary. Right?

Sheila nods.

SHEILA

Yes.

Tommy kisses Lucy's head.

TOMMY

Okay.

Tommy, Sheila, and Lucy share a hug and some tears.

FADE OUT:

THE END.