

Metallic Pill

by

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FADE IN:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

JEFF HALE, 40s, prepares to swallow a large metallic pill.  
His wife DARCIE, 40s, sits alongside him on the bed.

DARCIE  
It might get stuck in your throat.

JEFF  
Don't say that.

DARCIE  
I mean, look at the size of it.

JEFF  
Show me again how I'm gonna look.

Darcie retrieves an image from her phone: A square-jawed dude  
in his twenties ripped with muscle.

DARCIE  
You're going to turn into him:  
Anton.

JEFF  
He's jacked.

He looks down upon his own body: lumpy, sagging, pathetic.

JEFF  
And what'll you look like?

Darcie scrolls, stopping on a sleek, sexy fitness instructor  
with rock-hard abs, nothing like Darcie's jiggly tummy.

Jeff nods in agreement. Good choice.

DARCIE  
She's the queen of abs. Her name is  
Elka.

JEFF  
Perfect. Let's do this right now.

Darcie snaps a second pill out of the plastic container.

DARCIE  
I'll take mine in here, and you  
take yours in the bathroom.

JEFF

Let's do it together.

DARCIE

They say the transition is weird.  
And it'll be more fun being apart.

JEFF

Jeff and Darcie will rendezvous as  
Anton and Elka.

A sly grin.

DARCIE

We've got three hours. Then we  
transition back to ourselves.

Jeff strips off his shirt.

DARCIE

And don't try anything stupid...

JEFF

Like turning into Anton and robbing  
a bank. Don't worry. I won't.

DARCIE

You could be arrested for just  
leaving the property while the pill  
is active. They have trackers in  
them.

JEFF

I'm ready.

DARCIE

Maybe we could switch it up: I  
could be Anton and you could be  
Elka.

Confusion spreads over Jeff's face.

DARCIE

A change of perspective might...

JEFF

Not interested. Sorry.

Jeff jogs off to the bathroom.

DARCIE

Don't you wonder what it would be  
like to change genders or races?

(MORE)

DARCIE (CONT'D)

This technology could revolutionize  
how humans perceive each other. It  
could solve all our hatred...

Jeff interrupts from behind the closed bathroom door.

JEFF

I took it.

She sighs.

Alone with her metallic pill, Darcie sits. A deep breath.

DARCIE

Please don't choke. Please don't...

She pops it and swigs from a nearby water bottle.

She pokes her stomach: Rock hard abs coming right up.

She waits. Feels her shoulders. Her breasts. Her face.

A thump from the bathroom.

Darcie stands. Paces. Rubs. Nothing happening. A dud.

More thumps from the bathroom. A soft gasp.

DARCIE

(calls to bathroom)

I've got nothing so far. How's it  
working for you?

Thud. Thud.

Darcie checks the mirror: Still 100 percent Darcie.

DARCIE

Jeff, is it working for...

The bathroom door swings open. Out steps Jeff as ANTON--A  
mountain of a man--A bodybuilder to put all others to shame.

DARCIE

Holy shit, Jeff. Look at you.

A viscous brown "syrup" oozes down Anton's chin.

DARCIE

It's not working for me. Why don't  
you wait in the bathroom for a  
minute.

Anton flexes in the mirror. His satisfied smirk breaks into a full-fledged grin. Rust-colored syrup stains his teeth.

He shoves the dresser as a test of strength. He tips it over, spilling out shirts and underwear.

Anton kicks a drawer across the room and heads straight for Darcie.

DARCIE

Uh. Jeff?

He sniffs her. Looms. Drools brown syrup.

DARCIE

Jeff?

Vacant, dead eyes.

DARCIE

Jeff. Please.

A line of his drool plops onto her sock.

She steps back, but he draws closer.

He stares coldly at Darcie until he sniffs out something else: the pills on the nightstand. He bounds to them.

He rips the packaging and shoves a handful of pills into his mouth. They crunch and pop under his molars.

He chews greedily. More. More. More.

DARCIE

Jeff. Stop.

An awful brown, rabid froth forms on his lips. He tips over the nightstand.

DARCIE

Fuck, Jeff. What're you doing?

Darcie grabs his wrist to stop him.

He whirls wildly. Swings at her. Growls like an animal. He bares his teeth: rust colored animal fangs.

Darcie grabs her phone, dashes to the bathroom, locks door.

Frantic dialing. A message sounds.

RECORDED VOICE (V.O.)  
 Emergency services. All dispatchers  
 are occupied. Please remain on the  
 line.

Darcie shouts into the phone, trying to will her way through  
 the "on hold" void.

DARCIE  
 I need help here. My husband is  
 having a fit. He took...

Crash. Smash. Outside the door, Anton smashes the bedroom.

Suddenly an alarm sounds from Darcie's phone. A red warning  
 bar flashes on her screen. A recorded voice calls out:

RECORDED VOICE (V.O.)  
 Alert. Product failure. Alert.  
 Product failure. Please contact our  
 Customer Services Department...

Bam. Bam. Anton slams the other side of the bathroom door.

Darcie drops the phone and throws her body against the door.

Bam. Anton pounds and shoves. The flimsy lock won't hold.

Darcie squats. She clutches her gut. Gasps.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anton pounds on the door, his face smeared with the syrup. It  
 leaks out of his ears, eyes, and every pore. He's melting.

The door smashes under his fist, but he clutches his face.

He drops. His rage and super-strength giving way to agony.

He collapses, struggles for breath.

ANTON  
 (a gasp)  
 Help.

His hand reaches to the bathroom door.

ANTON  
 (a whisper)  
 Help...

After a long wait, the bathroom door swings open.

Into the bedroom steps Darcie as ELKA, the queen of abs. Her pill finally took hold.

Elka is every bit the goddess depicted in the preview. She runs her fingers across her super-toned stomach muscles.

Anton reaches out in agony. Elka steps over him.

She cartwheels on the bedroom carpet, laughing at her newfound agility.

ANTON

Please...

After a few more tumbles around the room, Elka notices Anton.

Darcie's phone sputters another warning:

RECORDED VOICE (V.O.)

Product failure. Product failure.

She draws close. Assesses. Sniffs. Looks into his pleading eyes. Jeff is down under there somewhere.

Elka surveys him with cold eyes. She's Darcie no more.

She raises her foot and smashes it down on Anton's face. The awful blow splits him apart.

She assesses what she's done. A line of brown drool falls from her lip. A pleased little smile.

She bounds out of the room.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Elka cartwheels to the front door, throws it open, admires the night.

Somewhere down the block, a scream sounds. A few shouts come from an opposite faraway direction. A siren. Problems everywhere.

As Elka struts into the darkness, a different warning blares from Darcie's phone.

ALARM VOICE (V.O.)

High alert. High alert. You have violated the terms of your agreement.

Elka disappears into the night, but the alert continues:

ALARM VOICE (V.O.)  
High alert. High alert. Step back  
immediately.

FADE OUT: