

CATHARSIS

Written by  
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FADE IN:

**INT. SWIMMING POOL - DAY**

HEAD ON of a woman swimming breast-stroke.

She reaches the edge of the pool, pulls her goggles up onto her forehead.

She is crying.

**INT. POOL CHANGE ROOM - LATER**

The same woman, SANDRA (30's), slim, sits looking despondent on the bench seat by her locker.

**EXT. INNER CITY STREET - DUSK**

A black Audi A6 moves slowly past dingy, graffitied terraces.

**INT. CAR - DUSK**

Sandra downs the drivers window, looking for the correct address. Stops as she identifies it, but parks two houses down.

**EXT. STREET - DUSK**

Dressed in smart, corporate attire she is a fish out of water here and looks it, clutching her handbag close to her body.

Pausing outside the black metal door, she takes a deep breath and glances up at the security camera as she presses the buzzer.

**INT. TERRACE - DUSK**

A security camera image of Sandra buzzed in.

A bare-bones, dim interior. DEALER (30's) lounges on the sofa, lit by the flickering TV. He doesn't bother to get

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up - he sees her for what she is - a harmless newbie. He mutes the TV.

SANDRA

Hi, I've heard you have something that is good for... sleeping?  
No, not sleeping, something for... dreaming?  
(beat)  
You see, I had a daughter...

He regards her for a moment.

DEALER

I know what you want.

Dealer slides a box from behind the sofa and rifles through the contents.

DEALER (cont'd)

I seem to be getting a certain type of client for these ones.

He finds a bag of blue capsules which he holds up to her.

DEALER (cont'd)

You're looking at the future here, luv. And, you know, that don't come cheap.

But I hear they're real good. Not really MY thing though. Don't really know if I wanna fuck with some of my memories. Know what I'm saying?

SANDRA

(impatient)

Can I take just a couple?

DEALER

A couple ain't really the custom in my business luv. (beat)  
But I do like to look after my new customers.

As he holds out the baggie containing two tablets, he pauses and looks her in the eye.

DEALER (cont'd)

Good memories, are they?

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CONTINUED:

Sandra nods. He drops the bag into her hand.

DEALER (cont'd)  
Sweet dreams then.

**INT. SANDRA'S MASTER BEDROOM - EVENING**

A little girls lovely, crisp, white lacy dress is laid out on the bed. Sandra's HUSBAND (40's), gentle, subdued, walks in.

SANDRA  
(teary)  
It's so... new, she never even got to wear it.

HUSBAND  
(embracing her from behind)  
We can still keep it. It'll always be hers.

**SAME - LATER**

Sandra sits up in bed. Using large dressmaking scissors, she cuts out school yearbook pics of her daughter for a scrapbook.

She starts softly sobbing. Her husband, reading next to her, takes the scissors from her and sets them on her bedside table.

HUSBAND  
Get some sleep, you can finish that later.

CLOSE ON two blue tablets on her bedside table. She downs them with a gulp of water.

**SAME - LATER**

FROM ABOVE: Sandra's sleeping face has a joyous smile.

----- **BEGIN DREAM** -----

**INT. CHURCH - DAY**

Sandra and husband are part of a church congregation.

A procession of 30 children, boy and girl, side by side, make their way up the centre aisle. It's their First Communion, a key catholic ritual of sacrament.

Tears of joy run down Sandra's face. Her daughter, MEGAN (10), utterly adorable in her new white dress beams at her mum as she walks past holding a candle in her right hand and her boys hand in her left.

**EXT. CHURCH - LATER**

Megan runs to her parents, throwing her arms around Mum - so happy - a little girl enjoying public display for the first time.

MEGAN

Why are you crying mummy?

SANDRA

Just making memories, darling.

----- **END DREAM** -----

**INT. SANDRA'S MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING**

Sandra wakes with a gasp and sobs deep, joyful tears.

**INT. DEALERS APARTMENT - DUSK**

A security camera image of Sandra buzzed in.

**FADE TO BLACK:**

**FADE IN:**

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

CLOSE ON of two blue tablets on her bedside table. Her husband notices as she downs the tablets.

HUSBAND  
These ones look different lately,  
what are they?

SANDRA  
Dr Linder prescribed them. They're  
good.

HUSBAND  
You seemed better today. I'm glad  
they're helping.

He leans over and kisses her softly.

HUSBAND (cont'd)  
We'll get through this. Together.

**LATER**

FROM ABOVE: Once again, Sandra's sleeping face wears the happiest of smiles.

----- **BEGIN DREAM** -----

**INT. KITCHEN - AFTERNOON - CONTINUOUS**

Sandra and Megan cook cupcakes together. They add ingredients to a bowl and mix them.

SANDRA  
Hmm... just stir it for a while, I  
need to go to the bathroom.

MEGAN  
OK.

**BATHROOM**

Sandra FLUSHES the toilet and washes her hands. She opens the door.

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A huge MAN in the doorway.

MAN  
Hello my little chick-a-dee. It's  
been a long time.

Sandra turns white, backs up against the wall.

MAN (cont'd)  
(moving towards her)  
Daddy's come to help you get dressed.  
(beat) You always did have trouble  
with your pants.

Sandra is wide-eyed freaked.

MAN (cont'd)  
Is that any way to greet your  
favourite stepfather? We always had  
such fun.

MEGAN (O.S.)  
Mummy, I've stirred it.

MAN  
Mummy?

Man turns towards the voice. Turns back to Sandra.

MAN (cont'd)  
Oh...  
We've been quite the little slut  
then, haven't we?

Man moves towards the voice.

MAN (cont'd)  
So, I have a granddaughter? You must  
introduce me...

SANDRA  
NOOO...

Sandra throws herself at him.

But he controls her, pushing her back. Pins her wrists  
against the wall.

Mashes his body against hers. Licks around her mouth and  
slobbers her cleavage.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He grins a fat grin.

Releases his grip and moves towards the voice in the kitchen.

Sandra tackles him from behind, but his fat legs push through.

### **KITCHEN**

He fills the kitchen doorway.

MEGAN  
(turning)  
Mummy?

Megan regards the man in front of her with surprise.

SANDRA (O.S.)  
Megan, run.

That turns in an instant to terror. She backs away, not taking her eyes off him.

MAN  
Hi Megan. I'm your gran daddy, John.  
I'm very pleased to meet you.

Sandra throws herself at him again.

He roughly grabs her. Now she's simply an annoyance. He lifts her roughly up to his face and pushes her to the floor, her head bouncing on the tiles.

He returns his attention to Megan but she is gone.

He moves up the hallway.

### **BEDROOM**

No sign of Megan.

MAN  
Awww, don't be like that Megan.  
Every little girl needs her gran  
daddy.

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Megan's POV as she looks through the crack between closet doors. Her BREATHING loud.

Man slowly turns around towards the closet.

MAN (cont'd)  
You like dress ups?

He slowly opens the twin closet doors...

MAN (cont'd)  
I can help you with that.

SANDRA  
Aaarrrrggggghhh!!!!

Phhhhtttttt...

The man's eyes bulge...

He turns around...

A pair of heavy dressmaking scissors stick halfway into his huge neck.

He hits the floor dead.

----- **END DREAM** -----

SANDRA  
Aaarrrrggggghhh!!!!

She is kneeling over her husband in bed, both hands around the scissors plunged into her husbands chest.

Sandra's POV of his eyes are bulging, wide, unblinking.

SHOT TILTS DOWN...

His white knuckle hands straining around the scissors.

He has stopped the scissors in time.

Their terrified eyes meet.

She collapses in tears onto him.

FADE OUT:

**INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Close on of her bedside table. No tablets this time.

**BATHROOM**

Sandra FLUSHES the remaining tablets.

**EXT. CEMETERY - DAY**

Sandra has a bouquet of flowers. She stands in front of an overgrown, unkempt grave, staring at the headstone.

John Avery  
1930-2003

She looks to her right, smiles and walks along to another nearby grave. This one beautifully kept and adorned with porcelain angels. She places the flowers in the vase and sits down on the granite.

SANDRA

Hello my darling precious. It was so wonderful to see you again, you looked so beautiful in your dress. I loved that you...

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

**INT. SWIMMING POOL - DAY**

HEAD ON of Sandra swimming breast-stroke once again. She reaches the edge of the pool, pulls her goggles up onto forehead.

This time she smiles.

FADE OUT.

THE END