

ONLY IN DREAMS

by

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EXT. NEW YORK CITY - STREET - DAY

MARC SOMAS, (30) in unremarkable business attire, waits with the rest of the herd for the walk sign. The sign flashes and the crowd shuffles along. Typical pedestrian commute.

Stopped at the red light is a classic Mercedes with a DISTINGUISHED GENTLEMAN at the wheel and an unfairly attractive LADY sitting shotgun.

Marc stops halfway through the crosswalk, staring at the woman. She rolls her eyes. The gentleman shoos him away with an engine rev. Marc walks on.

He doesn't notice a HOMELESS MAN with a ripped Styrofoam begging cup.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Dozens of monochromatic, walled-in workstations ensure all company workers are not distracted by trivial things like a view, other people, or life itself.

Marc enters numbers into an Excel document. He pokes his head out of his cubicle; sees no one.

He minimizes the spreadsheet and logs on to Facebook. At the top is a wall posting by MEGAN SWISHER: Beautiful here in Croatia, never wanna leave!

He looks annoyed and assigns the "Hide" option to her.

The next post is from a CARL LEVENS: When will the sweet hand of death save me from this working hell?

Marc types in "I hear ya buddy."

A co-worker walks by, prompting Marc to minimize the screen. When the coast is clear, he brings it back up and types FLORENCE LEIBINIZ.

The page of a beautiful woman (29) comes up. Marc rests his cheek on his hand as he scrolls through her pictures.

ANNA (V.O.)
Marc, is that you?

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Marc closes the front door and drops his keys on a table. The domicile is cluttered with knick knacks, similar to a thrift store.

MARC
Yeah, it's me.

ANNA (O.S.)
You're home late.

MARC
Yeah. They're really piling it on there.

ANNA (O.S.)
Sorry.

MARC
You didn't do it, did ya?

ANNA (O.S.)
Any interest in going to the gym with me?

MARC
Nah. I'm wiped. Probably just gonna watch the game.

ANNA, pretty in a vanilla way, enters the room, leans over the couch and gives him a casual kiss on the cheek.

ANNA
Okay. Plenty of leftovers. I'll see you later.

She leaves as he settles in with the remote control.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anna sleeps with her back to Marc who stares at the clock. It reads "2:54." He sighs.

EXT. STREET DAY - DAY

Marc, in the same suit as before, steps out the front door of his apartment complex. The morning has brought a fiery orange sky.

EXT. STREET - FURTHER

Marc stops at a coffee stand. The VENDOR with braided sideburns greets him.

VENDOR
What'll it be, sir?

MARC
Medium, light, and sweet.

VENDOR
Sure thing. Two cents my friend.

MARC
Two? It used to be half that.

VENDOR
Yeah. This and everything else.

Reluctantly, he pays the vendor and takes his drink.

EXT. STREET - CORNER

Stopped at a familiar corner, Marc and the masses wait for the light to turn. It flashes "NOW!"

The people, in groups of two, Marc included, hold each other's hand and start to cross.

The Gentleman and Lady again wait at the light, this time in the "General Lee."

MARC
Lucky.

He steps on the curb, his STRANGER's hand in his. Someone repels down a nearby building and almost lands on him.

MARC
Watch where you're going pal.

The person turns around. It is FLORENCE.

FLORENCE
Marc? Is that you?

MARC
Florence?

The Stranger, still holding Marc's hand, tugs.

MARC
(to the stranger)
Hold on!
(to Florence)
What are you doing here?

FLORENCE
Climbing down this building. Think
I'll climb up that one next.

She points down the street where apparently now the Sydney Opera House resides.

The Stranger tugs again. Marc tugs back.

MARC
I didn't know you were in town. You
look incredible.

FLORENCE
Thank you. You look... you look
like you're on the wrong aspect
ratio.

MARC
Yeah well, what can you do? Listen
you want to get together later?

FLORENCE
Maybe. I might be busy. Call me.

MARC
Sure, what's your number now?

FLORENCE
Five.

MARC
Five. Got it.

FLORENCE
Listen I gotta get going and by the
looks of it so do you. Your partner
is melting.

The Stranger holding Marc's hand is now a dripping, ice cream version of himself. It flashes an embarrassed smile.

Marc turns back to Florence who has left, then back to his melting Stranger.

MARC
Really? That's what we do?

The Stranger burps a milky bubble.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Marc's eyelids burst open and he quickly sits up in bed. He stares suspiciously at objects in the room: a chair, a TV, his hands.

MARC
The fuck?

INT. OFFICE - DAY

A co-worker passes Marc's cubicle. Marc offers a plastic wave and pulls up a Facebook window when the worker's gone.

Florence's photo album. Pictures of her doing awesome things at awesome places. Repelling in the Rockies. Swimming with sand sharks. Eating with locals in South America.

Marc cracks a smile that quickly turns.

Florence's wedding portrait to a man other than Marc.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Across from Anna, Marc tries to load a ziti noodle on each prong of his fork. Anna watches and looks for anything to say.

ANNA
Work any better?

MARC
Nah.

ANNA
I'm sorry.

MARC
Kinda used to it.

A silence breezes through.

ANNA
Well at least--

MARC
You ever remember your dreams?

ANNA
Not usually. Why? Did you have one?

MARC
Nah. Just wondering.

Marc puts the loaded fork in his mouth and turns away.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Anna's fast asleep. Marc tosses and turns; huffs at his insomnia. Night turns into...

DAY

and no sleep for Marc. Tired and annoyed he hangs his feet over the bed and rests his head in his hands.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Marc, hair shower wet, brushes his teeth.

FLORENCE (O.S.)
Marc! Marc!

Marc stops brushing and sticks his head out the door.

FLORENCE (O.S.)
Hey Marc!

HALLWAY

He jumps on to the walking sideway installed in the hallway. Marc, anxious, tries to walk faster but is blocked by a group of SENIOR CITIZENS.

FLORENCE (O.S.)
You coming or what?

He cuts through the elderly crowd, and exits at the...

LIVING ROOM

and runs to the window. Florence in torn jeans and a flannel shirt circa 1992 waits in the street below.

FLORENCE

What, were you sleeping or something?

EXT. STREET - DAY

Florence and Marc, now in similar grunge attire, nonchalantly hover down the street.

MARC

It was really great to see you the other day.

FLORENCE

What? I go away for one weekend and you go all gay on me?

MARC

Was it only one? Seemed longer.

FLORENCE

That's 'cause, unlike me, you have only one friend, namely moi.

MARC

I have more than one friend.

FLORENCE

Oh yeah. Name 'em.

MARC

Ummm... Uncle Pennybags.

UNCLE PENNYBAGS, the Monopoly mascot, sticks his head out a nearby window.

UNCLE PENNYBAGS

To the contrary sir, I have never seen you before and would appreciate you refraining from such accusations.

Marc smiles with his hand in the cookie jar.

A loud tugboat horn sounds in the distance.

FLORENCE
First period, better hurry.

Florence speedily floats away. Marc tries to but can't balance himself properly. She comes back and takes his hand.

FLORENCE
C'mon spaz.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Marc and Florence sit adjacent to each other. MS. COOPER, (40s) skin tanned leather and with fried afro-perm, conducts class. Her voice sounds as if she's speaking underwater.

Marc scribbles a note and passes it to Florence.

INSERT - NOTE - Did you really get married? Check yes or no.

Florence circles a choice and hands it back. It's "yes."

Disappointed, Marc writes "but you were supposed to marry me," and passes it back.

Florence answers and gives it to Marc.

INSERT - NOTE - How could I if we had already broken up?

Marc shrugs his shoulders, writes "Would you have?" and slides it on her desk.

She takes a while to respond, jots something, and places the note in his hand.

He unfolds it and reads "I dunno. This is your dream."

MARC
What?

Ms. Cooper slams both hands on his desk and with a blaring voice screams...

MS. COOPER
SHE SAID THIS IS YOUR DREAM!

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Marc flails out of bed onto the floor, startling Anna.

ANNA
Jesus, Marc are you alright.

MARC
Yeah, I'm fine. I'm great. How are you?

ANNA
Great. You gonna get ready for work soon?

He checks his clock.

MARC
Dammit. Can't believe I slept so late.

ANNA
Think fast.

He turns as she tosses an old book at him. He catches it and reads the cover: "The Oneironaut: Power Of and In Dreams."

ANNA
You were saying something the other day and I saw it in a window. Only two bucks.

He looks at her. She walks over, throws an arm around his shoulder, and goes for a kiss as he looks back down at the book making her settle for his cheek.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Feet kicked up, Marc reads the book in his cubicle.

FOCUS ON - SELECTED PASSAGES

-- Lucid dreaming is...

-- ...aware and can actively participate.

-- one method is to read text, look away, and read again.

MARC
"If the person is dreaming, the text will almost always change into something else." Really?

Marc looks back down.

FOCUS ON - PASSAGE

-- Marc, why would I lie?

Marc's taken aback. Two hands grab his shoulders.

FLORENCE

Boo!

He jumps in his seat much to her delight.

MARC

You! Why didn't you tell me you're not real?

FLORENCE

Does it really matter?

MARC

Yeah, it matters.

FLORENCE

Why?

MARC

Well... you don't... you know... without telling. That's weak.

FLORENCE

Weaker than dreaming about being at a job you hate. Let's get out of here.

He sees her logic and tosses the book on her desk. All the letters fall off the pages.

The two of them enter a maze of cubicles. More oddly, soccer ball sized glowing orbs float about chest high every five feet. More amused than confused, the duo walk under, around, and between them.

FLORENCE

What about you? You shackin' up?

MARC

Yeah, I guess. Kinda. We've only been seeing each other for...

FLORENCE

For?

MARC

(surprised at his answer)
Two years.

FLORENCE

Two years. Two years isn't kinda.
Two years is defin-a. Especially
when you're the dirty thirty.

MARC

Almost thirty.

She playfully puts two fingers a centimeter apart.

FLORENCE

Almost.

They pass through a cubicle crossing. Marc looks down a perpendicular section and sees two cherries where an orb should be.

MARC

Besides, we went out for almost two
years.

FLORENCE

Barely a year and a half and we
were younger. Much younger in your
case.

MARC

Yeah, well--

The whole office rumbles. Marc grabs Florence's forearm. She smiles. He turns around towards the intersection.

MARC

What the hell was that?

A large, circular, yellow being flies through the intersection and gobbles up the orbs. It's PACMAN.

MARC

Maybe we should get out of here.

EXT. VENICE CANAL - DUSK

Florence lounges in a gondola as Marc plays the part of the Gondolier. He hands her an empty glass.

MARC

Beer me please.

She dips it in the water, a dark brown color, and hands it back. He sips, and is satisfied.

MARC

Never knew Italy had such good stout.

FLORENCE

It doesn't. Now, tell me about...

MARC

Anna.

FLORENCE

Tell me about Anna.

MARC

She's great. We get along great. Never fight. Really cool chick.

FLORENCE

Well, idiot, if she's so cool, how come she's a "kinda."

MARC

It's just I don't feel the passion. The passion we had. And don't call me an idiot, jerk.

FLORENCE

Who you callin' jerk, ya retard. If you'll remember, half the times our passion resulted in screaming at the top of our lungs and throwing glasses across the room.

Marc crouches down to her. His oar slips away.

MARC

Yeah, but when it was good, it was great.

FLORENCE

And when it was bad, it was awful and that's why we broke up.

He slouches into the back corner of the gondola. Florence crawls back to him, putting her hands on his knees.

FLORENCE

I'm not saying forget about me. We had some great times. Times we'll never have with anyone else. But we didn't work out. This Anna chick sounds cool and good for you. Don't screw it up.

MARC
But what about you?

FLORENCE
What about me? We still got our
memories or else I wouldn't be
here. And I'll be here whenever you
want me too.

He looks off. She gently touches his cheek. Their eyes meet.

FLORENCE
Everyone's got someone that they
never speak of but think about
everyday.

Marc smiles. Florence reciprocates, turns, and grabs the
sides of the gondola.

FLORENCE
Now get ready. We're about to go
over the waterfall.

MARC
I didn't think there's a waterfall
in Venice.

FLORENCE
I didn't think the water was really
Guinness but I'm not the one
calling the shots.

Marc looks ahead. Sure enough, an Italian Niagara Falls. He
wraps himself around the oar's forcola as they float over
the edge and he falls out and lands in his...

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Marc's hands flounder. He drops *The Oneironaut* to the floor.
He picks it up and shakes it. The letters do not fall out.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Anna, about to leave in gym attire, runs into Marc at the
front door as he enters.

ANNA
Oh. Hey you. You're home early.

MARC

Yeah. Work wasn't so bad.

ANNA

That's great. I was just headed to the gym, if you're interested.

MARC

You know what. I think I am.

ANNA

Really? Uh...

MARC

Yeah, give me a second to change.

He runs to the bedroom, leaving Anna pleasantly surprised.

MONTAGE

-- EXT. GYM - On neighboring treadmills, Marc and Anna run. She smiles, he returns, and cranks his to 9 MPH.

-- INT. BEDROOM - Anna enters, freshly showered.

ANNA

That wasn't so bad. Hey I thought we could--

Her words halted by the sight of Marc sweaty and sleeping.

-- INT. BATHROOM - Marc pulls a T-shirt over his head but stops at his gut. Dissatisfied at his still rotund shape, he scrunches his face and his belly turns into a six pack.

-- EXT. ROSELAND MUSIC HALL - NIGHT - Marc walks to Florence, spins, and shows off his new figure. They enter the venue whose marquee reads "TONIGHT ONLY: NIRVANA, HENDRIX, WITH SPECIAL GUEST BEETHOVEN."

-- INT. DRUGSTORE - Already with toothpaste and deodorant, Marc walks towards the cashier. He spots something. Sleeping aids. He tips them, one by one, into his basket.

-- INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT - Marc's snoring keeps Anna awake.

-- EXT. AFRICAN GRASSLAND - DAY - A lion resembling Marc creeps behind a gazelle. Mere feet away, the gazelle turns, roars ferociously past its surprisingly big jaws, and sends Marc packing. Far off, lion-Florence rolls with laughter.

-- INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY - Marc in his suit follows a well dressed Anna to the door. They both have coffees. He notices something is missing from his briefcase. Anna, flustered checks her watch, obviously late, kisses him on the cheek, and leaves. Marc dumps his coffee and smiles.

-- INT. BEDROOM - DAY - Curtains drawn and suit draped on a chair, Marc snuggles in his bed.

-- EXT. FIELD - DAY - Marc and Florence eat sandwiches, laughing. They see something in the sky; it falls at them. They cower in each others arms. A New York Yankee OUTFIELDER jumps over them, catches the object, a fly ball, and throws to the cutoff man. They applaud wildly.

-- EXT. STREET - DAY - At a familiar corner, a suited Marc looks down the block he's waiting to cross and sees a sign for the ENDYMION HOTEL.

-- INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY - Marc drops his key with the Endyion tag on a crappy nightstand and tests the springs of the questionable mattress. He lays back; falls into a...

-- EXT. CLOUD - DAY - where Florence and him playfully wrestle. They catch eyes. Their touching hands merge together as they kiss thousands of feet in the air.

-- INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY - Marc tosses around the bed, moaning and groaning.

END MONTAGE

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Marc steps through the front door, closes it, leans against it, breathes out, and grimaces.

He takes off his suit jacket, but doesn't see a small paper that falls out of a pocket. Instead, he notices a large stuffed toy giraffe.

MARC

Florence? After Africa this'll seem
kinda tame, don't you think?

ANNA (O.S.)

Did you say something?

Startling Marc, Anna enters from the bedroom.

MARC

Anna? Hey, uh, what's with the...

ANNA

For your niece. It's her favorite animal. Her birthday party's tonight, remember?

MARC

Party?

ANNA

Why would you remember? You haven't listened to anything I've said for weeks now, why would this be any different?

MARC

I'm sorry Anna. Just so much stuff at work.

ANNA

Yes, work. Always work right? Poor you. The only one stressed. I had to take a half day to bake cupcakes for your niece but let's not mention that.

MARC

Hey. I'm sorry if my job doesn't just allow me to take off whenever I want.

ANNA

What's that supposed to mean?

MARC

Mean? Nothing. I'm tired, okay? I'm going to bed.

He storms past her to the bedroom.

ANNA

Yes, bed. God knows you haven't had enough sleep lately.

Marc flashes her a dirty look and slams the bedroom door.

Anna clenches her fists. Frustrated, she looks down and spots the small piece of paper Marc dropped.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Florence throws the door open on a half undressed Marc.

ANNA
Where were you today?!

MARC
At work.

ANNA
Really? Then what's this?

She presents him with the paper; a hotel receipt.

ANNA
I'll ask you again. Where were you?

MARC
Alright. I went to work but halfway there I started feeling... bad. Tired. I called in sick. I got a room at a hotel. I couldn't come here with you baking and shit. I'd never get to sleep.

ANNA
Really?

MARC
Really.

ANNA
That's the truth?

MARC
God's honest.

Marc tries to read her face which smiles and laughs.

ANNA
You son of a bitch. I never told you I took a half day. I just did.

She leaves, furious. Marc follows her to the...

LIVING ROOM

...and slams his hand against the front door as she tries to open it.

MARC
Anna, it's not what you think!

ANNA
Fuck you, I'm not that stupid.

MARC
I'm telling you.

ANNA
Look me in the eye. Look me in the
fuckin' eye and tell me there's
nobody else.

He tries but his mouth cannot.

ANNA
You're pathetic.

She shoulder checks him aside and leaves.

INT. COLLEGE CAFETERIA - DAY

Marc and Florence, trays in hands, sit down at a folding
table.

FLORENCE
Alright, Mr. set designer. Why the
hell are we here?

MARC
You don't remember?

FLORENCE
I don't remember most of college.

MARC
This is where I first took you out.

FLORENCE
Really?

MARC
Yup. First time I paid anyways.

FLORENCE
We stayed together for how long?

MARC
You know you can't resist
overcooked macaroni.

FLORENCE

Yeah, well it looks like they've been cooking the same tray ever since.

MARC

Listen, I wanna talk about us.

FLORENCE

Us? Us, us. There's no us. There's was. There is a you and Anna but there's no us.

MARC

Yeah, well there was a me and Anna.

FLORENCE

Was? What do you mean "was?"

MARC

Nothing.
(to no one)
Garcon, coffee.

She grabs his hand and makes him look into her eyes.

FLORENCE

No "Garcon, coffee." What do you mean "was?"

MARC

We broke up, alright? People break up. You and I broke up.

FLORENCE

Why?

MARC

I don't even know anymore. You were always--

FLORENCE

Not you and I. You and Anna. Why?

MARC

It's complicated.

FLORENCE

Tell me it doesn't involve me.

He looks off.

MARC
No, don't flatter--

She slams his hand down and pulls it and him forward.

FLORENCE
Tell me!

MARC
I just don't love her like I love
you.

She throws his hand away in disbelief.

FLORENCE
Me? What do you think I am? No... I
can't. I won't. I won't be a part
of this.

She ducks under the table. He jumps to her side, looks
under. She's gone.

MARC
Florence? Florence!

Frustrated and furious, he flips the table. It soars through
the ceiling into the sky.

His fist balled, they charge with energy. He blasts the
walls, the tables, the students; anything he can destroy.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

He jerks awake, punches his headboard, and recoils in pain.

The Oneironaut is on his nightstand. He flips it open.

MARC
"...May believe they have stopped
and start exiting the room..."

He puts his finger on the line, looks away, and then back.

FOCUS ON - PASSAGE:

-- may believe they have stopped and start exiting the room.

Marc throws the book across the room.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Marc, against the light, walks through a familiar crossing. He looks up the side of the building, and doesn't notice the Mercedes that has to screech to a stop.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The knick knacks remain but the rest of the furniture is gone, save for the recliner Marc is curled in. He checks his watch: 6:02, and takes another shot of NyQuil. He bunches himself tighter, and tries to not notice the sun coming up in the window.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

In the same crappy hotel room as before. He lays, eyes closed, yet awake. He closes them tighter, nothing. Tears run through the crack of his lids.

INT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT

The homely denizens drink from cans while Marc, too many shot glasses in front of him, tries to flag the unhappy BARTENDER without looking up.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Marc is thrown out the back door and lands in sludge and worse. He collapses; passes out to...

DREAMSPACE

Marc turns in circles. The dream environments pass by, classroom, Venice, field, cafeteria, with Florence missing from all of them.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

Mark, indifferent to his BOSS, whose suit matches the fabric cubicle walls, leans back in his chair, unshaven and worn looking.

BOSS

I'm sorry. But we can't have it anymore. Protocol says you get half an hour. Then I got to call security to escort you out. Sorry, Marc.

The boss hands him a cardboard box.

MARC

Whatever.

The boss leaves. Marc swivels back to computer and brings up Florence's Facebook page again. A tear runs down his cheek.

"1 New Post" appears on the screen. Marc clicks on it.

FOCUS ON - POST - Laid over in NYC. Maybe swing by the Zoo and see my peeps.

Marc tosses the box, grabs his jacket, and runs off.

EXT. ZOO - LION EXHIBIT - DAY

The lion pride basks in the sun They do little but look great. On the other side of the exhibit, Florence points at a lioness whose cubs play on top of her.

FLORENCE

Babies, you slut. You had babies?

Marc walks behind her; attempts to talk twice before...

MARC

Hey you.

She turns and at first doesn't recognizes him.

FLORENCE

Uh, hey. Marc? Marc, is that you?

Florence hugs him. Marc notices her slightly expecting belly.

MARC

Woah.

FLORENCE

Marc! It's so good to see you. Oh, this. Yeah. I'm officially a "girl in trouble." What are you doing here?

MARC

I could say the same thing.

FLORENCE

I was flying back from Ireland but the connecting flight had some kinda mechanical whatever. What are you...

MARC

Just hanging out. See you still love the lions.

FLORENCE

They had cubs. Look.

MARC

They give you any tips.

She rubs her belly.

FLORENCE

I wish. You look good.

MARC

So do you. Maybe in a different aspect ratio but...

She looks at him cockeyed, not quite getting the joke.

FLORENCE

Yeah, well. I guess. How've you been?

MARC

Good, good. I was hoping we could--

FLORENCE

Oh, there's someone I want you to meet.

She flags over TROY, (30) handsome enough chap, with a bag of popcorn.

FLORENCE

This is my husband, Troy. Troy, this is my old friend Marc.

TROY

Good to meet you, Marc.

He extends his hand which Marc eventually grabs.

MARC

Hope you got extra butter on that for her.

TROY

Sure did.

FLORENCE

Only cause I'm preggers. I know it's no good but you don't argue with a pregnant woman.

The three laugh, Marc half heartedly. Troy kisses Florence's hair. Marc muscles out a smile.

MARC

Listen, um, since I ran into you why don't we grab some lunch?

FLORENCE

Oh. Offering a pregnant woman food. Now you're twisting my arm. You hungry Troy?

TROY

I could always eat.

MARC

I'm sure Troy doesn't want to sit in. Listening to a hundred old inside jokes he has no idea about.

FLORENCE

He'll get by.

TROY

Any friend of Florence's, right?

Troy puts one hand on Florence's shoulder and one on the womb containing his unborn child. A silence stings the trio.

MARC

Yeah. I guess you're right. Wait what time is it?

Troy checks his watch.

TROY

It's about a quarter past two.

MARC

You sure. Damn. Took me longer to get here than I thought. I gotta get... I gotta get back to work.

FLORENCE

You sure?

MARC

Yeah, I'm sorry.

Marc flashes a fleeting wave and walks away.

FLORENCE

Marc. Next time I'm in town I'll
make sure to contact you. You can
see the baby.

The last words strike deep into Marc.

EXT. ZOO - ENTRANCE/EXIT - DAY

Marc cries and looks at the entrance sign. It reads: Thank
you for visiting the Bronx Zoo.

He shuts his eyes.

MARC

Don't be real. Don't be real. Don't
be real.

He opens his eyes. It still read: Thank you for visiting the
Bronx Zoo.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Marc sobs and sits in the recliner. He repeats a mantra.

MARC

Just go to sleep. Go to sleep. Go
to sleep. Go... to...

WHITE LANDSCAPE

MARC

...sleep.

Surrounded by white. No floor. No walls. No shadow. White.

He hears footsteps. He turns. They get louder but nothing is
there. He turns again. Louder. Nothing. One more time.

MARC

Florence.

Florence, in the same clothes as at the zoo, looking at him pitifully.

FLORENCE
Marc, what did you expect?

Marc crumbles. She does not try to console him.

MARC
I saw you.

FLORENCE
I know.

MARC
You're with him. You're having a baby with him.

FLORENCE
I know.

MARC
Then why didn't you say anything!

FLORENCE
I only knew once you did.

MARC
Bullshit!

FLORENCE
Marc, how could I know?

Marc wipes his teary face, and stands.

MARC
You left me.

FLORENCE
Florence and you left each other.

Marc grabs her by the collar.

MARC
You left me here!

She thrusts him to the ground.

FLORENCE
You left yourself! A part of you knew I was no good here.

MARC
(whimpering)
You left me.

FLORENCE
A part knew you couldn't move on.

MARC
You left me.

FLORENCE
There is no me! I don't exist. I'm
you! I'm what you can't leave
behind. I'm what you won't leave
behind.

MARC
But why can't I have you?

FLORENCE
Because it'll never be me. It'll
never be real. You need to move on.

MARC
Why can't it be?

FLORENCE
Why can't you just love what you
had? Some people never have that
love. Can't you appreciate how
lucky you are?!

MARC
Well if you know what's best for
me, why don't you just leave?

FLORENCE
You're the one keeping me here.
You're in control.

This sinks in with Marc. He stands, almost defiant.

MARC
I'm in control.

FLORENCE
Yes.

MARC
So I can keep you here?

FLORENCE
But I won't be real. You'll always
wake up.

MARC
Yeah, wake up.

FLORENCE
Always.

MARC
Wake up.

Now scared, she walks towards Marc.

FLORENCE
What are you doing?

MARC
You say this isn't reality? I'm
making it real. Wake up!

She beats on his chest in protest to no avail.

FLORENCE
Stop it, Marc! You don't know--

MARC
WAKE UP!

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Marc violently awakes in the recliner. Still saying...

MARC
Wake up, wake up, wake up.

He surveys the room and dashes for the door into the...

INT. APARTMENT STAIRWELL

...and stands at the top of the stairs. He turns around,
arms outstretched, back to the steps.

MARC
Now go to sleep.

He leans back, falls, body accepting every blow, and lands
in a ball at the base of the steps, unconscious.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - STREET - DAY

VOICE

Get up!

Marc wakes, filthy, dirty, ragged. He's nested in a bed of garbage and soiled blankets. He is homeless.

A beefy COP kicks him with his shoe.

COP

How many times I gotta tell you no
sleeping on the sidewalks?

Marc, beneath overgrown hair and a burly beard, scowls.

The cop moves on as Marc gets up, grabs a white object, and walks towards a city intersection.

Marc passes a classic Mercedes that stops for a light.

He waits at the corner and pulls out the white object; a ripped Styrofoam cup, Marc extends it to a man in unremarkable business attire who looks like a better off version of him. The man passes him by.

THE END.