

**ROSE**

written by

Luke Anthony Walker

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

A car speeds along a dark and desolate rural road, its headlights on full beam.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Soothing classical music plays over the stereo.

BEN, late 20's, wearing jogger bottoms and a hoodie, is driving. His attention intently focused on the road ahead.

ANNA, late 20's, wearing a cosy puffer jacket and bobble hat, is sat beside him, cradling her heavily pregnant belly.

She rhythmically breathes, grimacing and groaning with pain.

Ben holds her hand, his attention switching between the road ahead and Anna.

Her pain eases.

ANNA

They're getting closer. I think she's eager to say hello.

Ben gives her a reassuring smile.

BEN

We're not far now. Just hang on.

He lets go of her hand and shifts into a higher gear.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The car speeds up.

A WOMAN covered in mud, with long sodden hair hiding her face, and wearing nothing but a dressing gown, suddenly appears in the middle of the road, gesturing for the car to stop.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Ben slams on the breaks, jolting the couple forward.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The car comes to a screeching halt, but still hits the woman, knocking her to the ground and out of sight.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Ben and Anna are flung back into their seats.

They sit silently, staring out the windscreen.

Ben turns to Anna.

BEN

You okay?

Anna protectively caresses her belly and nods.

Ben apprehensively gets out of the car, closing the door behind him.

EXT. CAR - NIGHT

Ben steps into the light of the head lamps, and stares down at the ground in-front of the bonnet.

He briefly kneels, then springs back up, anxiously clasping his hands behind his head.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Anna has another contraction.

She winces and moans with agony, tightly grasping the dashboard.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Ben turns to the car, alerted by Anna's wails.

He panics, unsure of what to do.

Ben urgently squats, lifts the woman up in his arms, and carries her limp body to the car.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Anna rhythmically breathes through her agonizing contraction.

The back door flings open.

Ben lays the woman on the back seat, and closes the door.

Anna stares at her in the rear view mirror.

Ben gets in and closes the door.

Anna roars with excruciating pain.

Ben starts the engine, shifts the car into gear and steps on it.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The car hurtles along the dark road.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Ben stares out the windscreen, his attention intently focused on the road ahead.

Anna's pain subsides.

She glances over her shoulder at the woman in the back.

ANNA

Oh my God. Is she dead?

Ben doesn't react.

ANNA

Ben!

BEN

I don't know.

Anna cumbersomely reaches into the back and places two fingers on the woman's wrist.

ANNA

I don't feel a pulse.

BEN

Shit.

Ben tightly grasps the steering wheel, and bangs the back of his head against his seat a few times.

BEN

What the fuck was she doing in the middle of the road?

Anna releases the woman's wrist.

BEN

There was nothing I could do, she just appeared out of nowhere.

Anna stretches further into the back, and lifts the lapel of the woman's muddy dressing gown.

Anna gasps, and lets out a harrowing shriek, startling Ben.

BEN

What is it? What's wrong?

Anna sits back in her seat, cups her hands over her mouth, and inconsolably wails.

Ben consoles her, placing his hand on her shoulder, his attention switching between the road ahead and Anna.

Unseen by them both, the woman sits up, her long hair dangling across her face.

She raises her hand and points toward the road ahead.

WOMAN

(shriek)

Stop!

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

A deer suddenly appears in the middle of the road, caught in the headlights.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Ben swerves the steering wheel.

The woman's no longer visible in the back.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The car careens off the road and crashes into a tree at the bottom of a ditch.

One working headlight illuminates the muddy trench. Smoke billows from the crushed bonnet.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Distorted classical music plays out the busted speakers.

Anna sits motionless. Her hat's fallen off her drooped head. Her long hair hangs across her face.

Ben's slumped over the steering wheel, blood trickling down his forehead, his lifeless eyes staring blankly at Anna.

Anna suddenly gasps, and lifts her head, revealing her bruised and bloody face.

She hyperventilates, panic-stricken.

Anna looks to Ben.

ANNA

(murmur)

Ben?

Anna whimpers.

She abruptly stops, spotting something between her legs.

ANNA

Ooh, no, no, no.

Anna agonizingly leans forward and unzips her jacket, revealing a dressing gown beneath.

ANNA

Ooh, my baby girl.

She reaches down, picks something up and cradles it in her gown.

ANNA

My, Rose.

Joan tries opening the door, but it's jammed.

She painfully rams it with her shoulder, determined to get out.

The door comes unstuck.

Anna forces it wider open, and tries to maneuver herself out of the car, but the bottom of her jacket is caught on the buckled handbrake.

She tugs on it but it won't come loose.

Anna awkwardly slips out of the jacket, and tumbles out of the car.

EXT. DITCH - NIGHT

Anna desperately drags herself through the thick mud with one arm.

She soon grows weary and comes to a halt. Her face suddenly plops straight into the mud.

Anna lays motionless, caked in mud from head to toe.

Beyond the light of the headlamps, the woman steps out of the shadows, and approaches Anna.

The woman kneels beside her and transfers the contents of Anna's dressing gown into her own.

The woman stands, her face is revealed.

It's Anna, gaunt and ghostly pale.

She trudges out of the light, cradling the contents of her muddy dressing gown.

**THE END**