

The Stranger

By

Ben Morales

benmorales55@gmail.com

FADE IN:

EXT-HIGHWAY-NIGHT

The empty highway is dead quiet and pitch black until a black luxury sedan comes flying by. The clouds are covering the sky so the highway is being lit solely by the sharp headlights of the car.

INT-CAR-NIGHT

Behind the wheel of the car is a white, middle-aged man. He keeps his left arm at his side. His right arm is extended outwards as he grasps the wheel with his right hand, causing the sleeve of his charcoal gray jacket to ride up his arm, exposing an expensive silver watch.

His clean-shaven, chiseled face is expressionless as he drives. He runs his left hand through his full head of brown hair. His left hand then wanders down to adjust his black tie, which sits atop his white shirt.

His apparent inscrutability juxtaposes the speed of his car, which, according to the speedometer, is just above ninety miles per hour.

EXT-NIGHT-HOUSE

The luxury sedan pulls into the empty driveway of a large, modern home and parks.

The man gets out of the car. Now that he is standing, we can see his whole slim, well-tailored, charcoal gray suit, which complements his lean build.

He walks to the back of the car, and opens the trunk. He pulls out a brown, leather brief case, which matches his shoes, and slings it over his shoulder.

He closes the trunk, locks the car, and walks to the front door of the house. He pulls a key out of his pocket, unlocks the door, and walks into the house.

INT-NIGHT-HOUSE

Like clockwork, he flicks the light on as he takes his first steps into the house. The light quickly floods the dining room (the first room in the house), abruptly exposing a STRANGER who is sitting at the head of the dining room table, facing the man. He wears a black suit and his head is bald. Both of his arms are atop the table, however, in his right hand, he nonchalantly clutches a black handgun with a silencer fixed onto it.

(CONTINUED)

The man stops dead in his tracks, staring at the stranger.

STRANGER

Please sit.

The man walks to the table and sits at the head opposite of the stranger. He and the stranger stare at each other in silence for a few seconds; however, the immediate tension causes it to feel like a few minutes.

STRANGER

Hello.

The man is sitting at the table exactly like the stranger, with perfect posture and both arms atop the table. The stranger continues to casually hold his gun.

MAN

What do you want.

STRANGER

(lightly)

I am here to kill you.

As the stranger speaks these words, the man nervously swallows.

MAN

Why?

STRANGER

(matter of factly)

Because someone paid me to. Why my client wants you dead? I do not know.

There's another intense moment of silence. The man, still sitting up straight, twiddles with his fingers. The stranger stares into the man's eyes with almost joyful intent, and the man looks back at the stranger with subtle fear.

MAN

So what are you waiting for?

STRANGER

How do mean?

MAN

Why haven't you shot me yet?

The stranger chuckles.

STRANGER
(enthusiastically)
I barely know you! You think I'm
gonna kill a man that I don't know?
I wasn't raised by wolves!

The man is clearly terrified and confused.

MAN
So you're gonna torture me?

STRANGER
(light heartedly)
No! I'm gonna talk to you. And
you're gonna talk to me. And if you
play your cards right, you might
walk out of here alive.

MAN
So it's like a game?

STRANGER
(laughingly)
Jesus Christ! It's a conversation.
Have you ever had one before?

The man audibly swallows again.

STRANGER
So. What do you do for a living?

MAN
I'm-

STRANGER
Wait! Don't answer that! That's a
bad question. Everyone always asks
about what people do for a living
but I don't think the answer to
that question can truly define
someone. I don't define myself as a
hitman. Yes, its how I make money,
but, I would more so define myself
as an outdoorsman.

It is clear that the man is thrown off by this somewhat
hysterical rant.

STRANGER
(cont'd)
So, a better question would be:
what are you passionate about?

There's a brief silence.

(CONTINUED)

STRANGER
(arrogantly)
Or do you have no passion?

MAN
(unconfidently)
I'm passionate about my job.

The stranger silently laughs.

STRANGER
Besides that! Would do you do
outside of work? What do you do
for fun?

MAN
I'm a busy guy. I don't have a lot
of time for fun.

STRANGER
So it's safe to say that you are
defined by your career?

MAN
I guess so.

STRANGER
(playfully)
Damn it! Now I have to ask. What do
you do for a living?

MAN
I'm a hedge fund trader.

Both the man's and the stranger's faces are piercingly
monotonous.

STRANGER
Why?

MAN
It's a good job. It pays the bills.

The stranger blatantly moves his head around the expensively
furnished house.

STRANGER
(laughingly)
Well it looks like it pays for more
than just the bills.

MAN
It's a good job.

STRANGER
Is it?

MAN
What do you mean?

STRANGER
Do you enjoy it?

MAN
(unconvincingly)
Yeah.

The stranger gives the man a look as if to say "come on, really?"

MAN
It doesn't have to be enjoyable for
it to be a good job.

STRANGER
Fair enough. But why do you keep
your job if its not enjoyable.

MAN
I'm lucky to have such a high
paying job. I'm not gonna let it
go.

STRANGER
That doesn't really answer my
question.

There is another piercingly long moment of silence.

STRANGER
Would you say your job is
fulfilling?

The man's monotonous face becomes just barely annoyed.

MAN
My success is fulfilling.

STRANGER
Fulfilling for your bank account.

The man's jaw is visibly clenched as he slouches in his
seat.

(CONTINUED)

The stranger stares directly into the man's eyes with a subtle smile.

STRANGER

And for what purpose do you need your financial success? Do you have kids to pay for?

MAN

No.

STRANGER

An expensive hobby?

MAN

No.

STRANGER

So you keep your unenjoyable, unfulfilling job just so you can sit back in your expensive home and expensive car and say "fuck you" to the rest of the world.

There's another long moment of silent tension as the stranger stares judgingly into the man's eyes.

STRANGER

Lets move on. Are you married?

The man straightens up in his seat.

MAN

Divorced.

STRANGER

What happened.

MAN

Marriage just wasn't for us. We were focused on our careers.

STRANGER

I see. You were married to your job?

The man opens his mouth to speak but is immediately cut off by the stranger.

STRANGER

(emphasizes "unhappiness")
Or, in other words, you were married to unhappiness.

MAN

I'm not unhappy.

STRANGER

Well you just that were passionate about a job that you don't enjoy.

MAN

(quietly)

I'm not unhappy.

STRANGER

What makes you happy then?

The man, whose face is clearly sweaty, looks aimlessly at the stranger.

STRANGER

Kids?

The man continues to stare into space.

STRANGER

(cont'd)

(sarcastically)

Wait, no. A hobby?

The man does not change.

STRANGER

(cont'd)

(sarcastically)

Oh yeah, forgot. Its just you and your bank account.

The stranger stares intensely at the man for a long ten seconds. During this time, there is dead silence. The man appears to be worried while the stranger appears to be contemplative.

STRANGER

I have one last question.

There's a long, dramatic silence as the stranger prepares to ask his final question. It is apparent that the man is mentally exhausted from the previous interrogation.

STRANGER

Why do you want to live?

During yet another elongated silence, the man goes deep into thought as he thinks of an answer; the stranger's body language is the same as its always been.

(CONTINUED)

MAN

(frantically)

Look, I can give you money.
Whatever you're being paid, I'll
double it.

STRANGER

That's not an answer.

MAN

I want to live. I'm not unhappy. My
life is fulfilling.

STRANGER

Why do you want to live?

MAN

(beggingly)

Please let me live.

STRANGER

All I need is one reason.

There's a final moment of dead silence.

STRANGER

People pay me to kill other people,
but, unfortunately, I'm a moral man
in an unmoral profession. As I said
before, I can't kill a man that I
don't know. I can't kill a man
with passion. I can't kill a man
with a family who relies on him. I
can't kill a man with a purpose to
live. To me, those qualities are
worth more than my pay check. I
wouldn't be able to sleep at night
if I knew that I killed someone who
lead a meaningful life. But, on
the other hand, if I killed someone
who couldn't even name a reason why
they wanted to live, then I would
sleep like a baby that night. A
man like that is a man worth less
than my pay check.

MAN

(sobbing)

Please let me go.

STRANGER

I've had this same exact
conversation with many other

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

STRANGER (cont'd)
people. The same questions.
Passion, family, purpose. When its
my choice to kill or save a man, it
is those three things that make the
decision. And from the many years
that I've been doing this, it is
not uncommon for me to let a man
live.

The man's face slightly transforms, going from despair to hope

STRANGER
But, that's not the case for you.

The man's face transforms again, going from hope back to despair.

The stranger slowly stands up, pushing in his chair. He holds his gun at his side as he is standing.

STRANGER
(cont'd)
From what I've gathered. Your life
is meaningless. You have no
passion, family, or purpose. All
you have is your soul-sucking job
and your material possessions. You
don't care about anything and
nothing cares about you. So,
therefore, I have no problem doing
what I was paid to do.

Swiftly, the Stranger aims his gun at the man and PULLS THE TRIGGER with his finger, sending a bullet through the man's brain, causing the man to fly backwards out of his chair. A cloud of blood erupts from the back of the man's head as the bullet makes its exit.

The walls of the man's dining room are now splattered with blood.

The stranger stands up and places his gun into a pocket inside his jacket. He picks up the casing from the floor, puts it into his pocket, and makes his way towards the door. He walks past the man, whose head is drowning in a pool of blood; however, he never glances at him. He opens the door and walks out, never looking back.

EXT-NIGHT-NEIGHBORHOOD

The stranger walks down the man's driveway and takes a right onto the street. He walks down the middle of the street through the unlit residential neighborhood. He eventually disappears into the darkness.

FADE OUT.

THE END