"WAITING"

BY

NIPPER ORCHARD

FADE IN:

INT. DENTIST'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

Cold white and stark. Stacks of old magazines sit on small tables. Landscape paintings, potted plants and a row of hard plastic chairs along one wall.

Three people occupy the seats.

SIMON (mid 30's, in vest, shorts and running shoes) sits reading a magazine. His eyes occasionally scan his fellow occupants.

HEATHER (late 40's, in a fine trouser suit, hair tied neatly into a bun) sits with her legs crossed, hands folded into her lap and looks down her nose.

MIKE (early 20's, muscular, wears paint stained construction boots and checked shirt) leans back in his chair, impatiently bouncing his knee up and down.

Heather looks over to Mike. She lets out an audible fake "cough". Mike looks back at her and then to his bouncing knee. He smiles awkwardly and stops.

A beat and Mike starts bouncing his knee again.

Heather looks over once more, clearly agitated.

HEATHER

(to Mike)

Excuse me!

MIKE

Oh... sorry.

Simon chuckles under his breath, not looking up from his magazine.

HEATHER

(to Simon)

Is something amusing?

SIMON

As a matter of fact, yeah!

HEATHER

Would you care to share?

SIMON

It's nothing... Sorry.

Simon straightens up. Heather checks her watch and sighs impatiently.

MIKE

(to Heather)

How long have you been waiting?

Heather thinks for a beat, shakes her head.

HEATHER

Huh... Too long.

MIKE

Yeah, me too.

An awkward silence.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Wouldn't be so bad if they didn't charge so much huh?

HEATHER

(polite smile)

I have dental.

MIKE

Oh... right.

Another awkward, silent beat.

SIMON

(without looking up)

Must be very nice for you.

HEATHER

I beg your pardon?

SIMON

Having dental. It must be very nice.

HEATHER

It's one of the benefits my company offers.

MIKE

Oh, who do you work for?

HEATHER

Campbell, Fitch and Winter.

SIMON

The Law Firm?

HEATHER

That's correct.

MIKE

Are you a lawyer? I have this problem with my neighbor, he keeps having these really loud parties and--

HEATHER

(disinterested)

I'm sorry but could we just wait quietly? Thank you.

Heather throws a condescending smile. More of an instruction than a request. The waiting room falls silent for a long beat.

SIMON

(to Mike)

I am no lawyer but my advice is to knock his teeth out!

MIKE

Really? I thought about it but it's just not in my nature you know?

SIMON

You look like you could handle yourself!

MIKE

I work out and my job is pretty physical but I am a pacifist. I hate violence.

SIMON

Sometimes they just have to be taught a lesson. Violence is the only language some fuckers understand!

Mike looks over to Heather, embarrassed by the swearing. She seems unbothered. Heather checks her watch again. She looks twice, annoyance on her face she holds it to her ear. She shakes her wrist and holds it to her ear again. Annoyed, she sighs loudly and "tutts".

SIMON (CONT'D)

You can shout and scream all you want and it will get you nowhere! If you bust him up a bit every time he does it, he'll get the message.

HEATHER

(to Mike)

And you will go straight to jail!

SIMON

Is that free legal advice?

HEATHER

Nothing in this world is free.

MIKE

I am not a violent person. I couldn't live with myself if I killed somebody.

I didn't say "kill"!

MIKE

Sorry?

SIMON

Kill somebody - you said: "if I
killed somebody".

MIKE

Did I?

HEATHER

Yes you did.

Simon nods "yes".

MIKE

(confused)

Slip of the tongue... I suppose.

HEATHER

Either way, you are right to exercise restraint. If there is a street committee or neighbor's association you could bring it to their attention.

MIKE

We don't have anything like that in my block.

The three wait silently for a long beat. Simon throws his magazine onto the table and falls back into his seat. He looks at his wrist - remembers there is no watch there. He scans the room for a clock - there isn't one.

SIMON

Anybody got the right time?

Mike looks at his watch. He taps the face of it and holds it to his ear. He takes it off and tries to wind it up.

MIKE

Sorry, my watch seems to have stopped.

HEATHER

Strange.

MIKE

Not really, it's only a cheap copy!

HEATHER

No, I mean my watch has also stopped... and mine is a Rolex.

How nice.

HEATHER

But now totally worthless.

MIKE

Huh, what a coincidence.

SIMON

(to Heather, snide)

It must be very nice having a Rolex and dental.

HEATHER

(to Simon)

Sorry? Have I offended you in some way?

SIMON

I am glad you asked! You don't know me but I know your company, very well!

HEATHER

Oh I get it - you were successfully sued by one of my colleagues?

SIMON

Lawyers are scum and should be wiped off the planet!

MTKE

(to Simon)

Hey buddy, take it--

SIMON

(angrier)

They should be lynched or tortured, like they torture their victims!

Heather stands up.

HEATHER

Perhaps you deserved what you got, maybe your representation let you down and--

SIMON

Your company was my representation!

HEATHER

Some cases cannot be won!

SIMON

Your company took my daughter away from me and gave her to that bitch!

MIKE

Ok, you two this has gone far enough just sit down and take it easy.

Heather sits down. Simon glares at her for a beat and then also sits down.

HEATHER

(quietly)

I am very sorry things didn't work out for you.

SIMON

I doubt you are being sincere and besides, apologies are not enough. I hate you and everything you stand for. You break up families and then take a pound of flesh for the privilege.

HEATHER

That is hardly fair.

SIMON

Fair?!

Simon laughs in mockery.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Is it fair that a little girl is now without her daddy?

MIKE

Come on you guys! Please, just calm down.

Simon continues to stare at Heather. Heather averts her gaze. She shuffles uncomfortably.

MIKE (CONT'D)

How much longer are they going to be, huh...?

Uncomfortable silence. Mike bounces his knee.

HEATHER

(to Mike)

Will you please stop that!

SIMON

He isn't breaking any laws.

HEATHER

That's it! I'm out of here.

Heather stands and walks to the door to leave. She grabs the door handle and tries to pull the door open. It won't budge. She tries again. The door will not open.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

It's locked!

She moves to the other door. Locked.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

What the?

Mike stands and tries the door also. Same result. Unmoving.

Heather BANGS on the door with the palm of her hand.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

(shouts)

Hello? Is anybody there, the door is locked! Could you let me out please?

No answer.

MIKE

Why is the door locked? Why would they lock us in here?

Simon stands and tries the door. It won't budge. He BANGS on the door with both hands.

SIMON

(shouts)

Hey! Unlock the fucking door! You've locked us in here you idiots!

Simon gets angrier. He begins SLAMMING the door with his shoulder and kicks it.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Open this fucking door or I'll fuck you up you bastards!

Mike and Heather watch Simon's rage with growing concern. Mike positions himself between Heather and Simon.

Simon PUNCHES the door and stumbles back. Sweat on his brow, his knuckles bleed, he is out of breath.

MIKE

Hey, buddy, you are scaring her--

SIMON

(livid)

I don't give a shit!

HEATHER

(to Simon)

If you lay one finger on me I will take you for everything you've got!

(to Heather)

Too late bitch. I got nothing left! Your friends already gave it all to my ex wife!

MIKE

It is not her fault! She wasn't even your lawyer!

SIMON

I have a better idea.

Simon moves towards Heather, his eyes are wide and filled with rage. Mike stands in the way, hand out stretched. Heather bangs on the door again.

HEATHER

(to Door)

Please! Let me in! Somebody help me!

MIKE

(to Simon)

Back off!

Simon swings a PUNCH at Mike. It connects and Simon falls down with a bloodied nose. He sits where he fell, stunned. Simon grabs Heather, she tries to scream as he begins to strangle her.

SIMON

This is for what you did to my little girl you fucker!

Simon's face is red with rage, Heather panics and brings her knee up into Simon's crotch. He doesn't even feel it.

Mike raises a hand to his nose and inspects the blood on his fingers. He stares at them, confused. Heather still struggles with Simon, she is lifted off the ground by him, her heels BANG against the door.

Simon drops Heather and backs off. He stares at his hands. Heather sits in a heap rubbing her neck.

They all look at each other. Heather on the floor, Simon in a chair and Mike transfixed by the blood on his fingers.

MIKE

I've seen blood on my hands before.

Simon turns his hands over as if they are alien to him, someone else's.

HEATHER

I... don't... I wasn't...

I went to his house. I was drunk...

MIKE

My neighbor didn't even put up a fight...

HEATHER

I wasn't ready. I hadn't prepared properly...

SIMON

His neck was easy to break. He couldn't fight back. He begged for his life with his eyes...

MIKE

I just... snapped. He was making my life hell! Couldn't sleep...

Heather breaks down and begins to sob.

HEATHER

He was innocent and I lied. He was innocent...

Simon punches the ground in anger.

SIMON

He shouldn't have taken my daughter from me! He had no right! He had no right...

Mike still stares at the blood on his hands.

MIKE

He wouldn't listen... I just hit him and hit him and hit him. I don't know at what point he died. But I kept hitting him...

HEATHER

I could have saved him. But I kept quiet and an innocent man was executed.

HEATHER, SIMON, MIKE

(simultaneously)

I killed him.

The three have changed in appearance.

Heather's suit is now drenched with blood. Two bullet holes in her chest, her hair untidy, her sleeve torn.

Simon looks to his wrists where there are now two deep cuts where they have been slashed.

Mike now has blue lips and blood shot eyes. His skin is a pale grey.

They all look to the door, fear and despair in their eyes. The door opens.

FADE OUT:

THE END