1952, Drummer Street

By

Wes Cravendale

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FADE IN:

**EXT. 1952, DRUMMER STREET – NIGHT**

An orange and cream 1952 Chevrolet Deluxe pulls onto the driveway of the detached, suburban house.

**PATTI PAGE (V.O.)**

(singing)
You came down the aisle, wearing
a smile – a vision of loveliness.
I uttered a sigh, whispered
goodbye, goodbye to my happiness.

**INT. CHEVROLET DELUXE – NIGHT**

The music stops as, in the driver seat, MAX SHELTON (47), portly, burst blood vessels in his cheeks and a drinker’s nose, switches off the engine. He runs fingers through his greased, black hair – dyed to hide the gray.

His navy blue suit creased from the drive, he reaches for a cashmere overcoat that he folds into the crook of his arm then plops a black, rabbit fur fedora onto his head.

**EXT. 1952, DRUMMER STREET – NIGHT**

He climbs out of the car and quietly nudges the door shut with his hip while he notes the overgrown front lawn, dead potted plants, peeling paintwork, and a boarded, broken bedroom window.

He pushes the front doorbell. The ‘ding dong’ slices through the quiet, causing him to glance at the other houses that flow in orderly lines either side of the road.

Every one of the houses are dark as though all are in bed.

He glances at his gold, automatic watch – sees it’s 7:30.

The front door opens a crack and light from a half-burned candle melted to a small plate illuminates the black, highly chiseled features of WILLAMINA JACKSON (35).

**MAX**
The old man forget to pay the bill or something?

**WILLAMINA**
Power’s been on and off ever since that new company took over, Mr. Shelton, suh.

Willamina disappears into the darkness.
Max pushes open the door, winces at the ingratiating squeak afforded by the badly rusted hinges, and hesitates at the threshold - waiting for his eyes to adjust to the impenetrable darkness beyond.

MAX
I can’t see a damned --

The lights in the hallway flare up and, with a satisfied grunt, Max steps inside, closing the door behind him.

Eight black MEN and WOMEN, one from each of the neighbors’ houses, move slowly toward number 1952.

INT. 1952, DRUMMER STREET - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Max hangs his hat and coat on an otherwise empty stand and, puzzled, points at it, but there’s nobody around.

He notices black mold covering most of the ceiling and wrinkles his nose.

MAX
That smell?

Burning incense sticks stuck into holes in the woodwork and door frames drop ash to the filthy floor.

MAX
No, that ain’t it. Willamina?
(shouts)
Willamina!

Willamina appears in the doorway of the basement, her curvaceous figure apparent even beneath the ill-fitting apron and raggedy clothes.

Max bites at his bottom lip while he traces the shape of her body with his eyes.

WILLAMINA
I bin so worried ‘bout your folks, runnin’ roun’ after ‘em ’n’ all, ain’t had time fuh --

MAX
The place will be sold anyway once they finally pop off.
(grins)
You haven’t changed a bit. You look exactly the same. I mean, exactly. That’s amazing.

WILLAMINA
Can I fix you somethin’, suh?
MAX
That’ll be mighty accommodating of you, Willamina, thank you.

Willamina scoots past him, heads into the kitchen.

Max eyes the basement stairs for a moment before closing the door and following Willamina.

INT. 1952, DRUMMER STREET - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Willamina works at the marble counter, slicing cucumber to go with the ham already atop a slice of freshly cut bread.

From the reflection in a nearby window, she can see Max lingering in the doorway, ogling her ass.

Eyes locked on her ass, Max moves in.

MAX
How long’s it been? Ten?

Willamina layers cucumber on top of the ham and slices some tomato rings.

MAX
Eleven years?

Max gasps as he pushes his groin against her ass.

She turns away, places the sandwich on the table, wipes her hands on her apron.

MAX
The amount of times I’ve fucked my fat, ungrateful wife and pictured you instead.

WILLAMINA
I best tend to your father, suh.

Willamina leaves as the power goes out.

MAX
He still getting it up?

Max lights a match, grabs the sandwich and bites into it.

INT. 1952, DRUMMER STREET - HALLWAY - NIGHT

At the bottom of the stairs, a match burns to Max’s fingers and he shakes it out with a muttered curse. He lights another, illuminating his face.

He heads up one creaky step at a time, the stench so bad he gags and places a hand over his nose.
The lights come on as he reaches the top. He puts the matches into a pocket and faced with four doors, two on each side, he nudges open the nearest with his foot.

**INT. 1952, DRUMMER STREET - BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Flies buzz as the door squeals open. Max’s chubby hand reaches for the light switch and flicks it a few times but nothing happens.

Max sparks a match and the dim luminescence reveals a figure beneath the blankets on a double bed.

**MAX**

Mom?

The match goes out, burning Max’s fingers. He sucks on them as, using only the light from the hallway to guide him, he sits on the edge of the bed.

**MAX**

I’m sorry. It’s just work and --

Max pats the lump in the bed and looks at it strangely. He stands and lifts back the covers. He screams and falls onto his ass on the floor.

In the bed, lies the mostly decayed corpse of his MOTHER.

Retching, Max crawls into the hallway and vomits.

**INT. 1952, DRUMMER STREET - HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Max looks up to find Willamina watching him. She moves past him and runs down the stairs.

He makes to go after her, but one of the other doors catches his eye as hoards of Bluebottles congregate around the edge of the frame, buzzing like crazy.

Wiping vomit from his lips and chin, Max struggles to his feet and opens the door.

**INT. 1952, DRUMMER STREET - FATHER’S ROOM - NIGHT**

Nailed to the floor, naked, emaciated, with surgical tubes hanging out of veins that drip his blood into glass milk bottles, FATHER (71), gargles unintelligibly.

Max edges closer - to make out what he’s saying.

**FATHER**

...nnnn... unnnn... runnnn!

An intense fear grips Max’s heart and he clutches his chest as he darts from the room.
INT. 1952, DRUMMER STREET - HALLWAY - NIGHT

The power drops and with it the lights as Max makes it to the stairs. He teeters at the edge, just saving himself from falling.

He fumbles in his pocket for the matches and drops them onto the step below. He senses something behind and turns as the power reignites the lights.

Willamina hits him over the head with a cast iron poker. Blood streams from his scalp to his jaw.

Lights flicker, strobe-like, as he loses consciousness and bounces down the stairs, landing in a heap at the bottom.

Unseen hands drag Max into the basement by his ankles, his head dully thuds off every step on the way down like a tempo deficient bass line.

INT. 1952, DRUMMER STREET - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Naked, hanging from thick chains secured to ceiling anchors, Max regains consciousness. He sobs and gargles through a tight gag crudely made from his own underwear.

Willamina inserts nine surgical tubes into his veins at various points on his arms, legs, and chest.

Watching, sit the eight neighbors. They drink blood from a milk bottle that they pass around. The Men have shared his clothes between them.

WILLAMINA
I know. I do. But this ain’t about you, suh. Ain’t about that neither. Your teeny pecker weren’t never designed to take a woman like me. Di’nt trouble me at all. No, suh, not at all.

Max whimpers as Willamina places her mouth over one of the tubes hanging from his veins and sucks some of his blood into her mouth.

She looks up at him, face full of rapture, teeth stained with his blood.

WILLAMINA
It just takes the years away, like they never was, is all.

The others place their mouths over the other tubes and begin to suck.

FADE OUT.