

BETA FISH

written by  
Brandon Schinzel

REVISION 3020

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brandonschinzel@yahoo.com

FADE IN:

EXT. FRONT YARD - SUNRISE

A QUIET morning in the suburban neighborhood looks safe, yet, still too early for traffic.

A mailbox shaped like a fish stands before a little white house with cement stairs.

A tow rope attached to the base of the mailbox post draws tight SNAP.

The mailbox is uprooted by an unknown source and drags across the cement.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION ZONE - SUNRISE

A torn construction zone across the street from the small white house. Four Mexican landscapers place rocks and plants around a man-made mud/water pond. A BOBCAT is parked in the distance.

Two ducks land in the quiet pond.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

The neat 1970's living room has two worn leather chairs. A massive portrait.

INSERT PHOTO:

A woman (70's) standing in a beautiful garden.

The calming rhythm of the TICKING grandfather clock hangs on the wall.

An orange flyer on a stack of opened mail on the nightstand reads:

"Park Homes Construction Project begins MAY 1st."

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

GEORGE (70s), White Caucasian, skinny, sleeps with a bit of a smile in a queen size bed.

Sunlight through a cracked window highlights a red beta fish in a glass bowl. An old TICKING alarm clock sits on the night stand.

The alarm clock sounds.

His hand searches for a pair of glasses on the nightstand. Placing them on his face, he squints at the time: 9:00am.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

George, dressed in a bathrobe, sits back in the leather chair patiently watching the phone. He checks his watch, lowers it to see: The grandfather clock matching his watch exactly.

The phone RINGS.

GEORGE

Hello.

TELEMARKETER

Hello, is Dorothy Davey available?

GEORGE

She's not.

TELEMARKETER

Hi, this is Karen with the Southeast Parks and Recreation Donors Fund.

GEORGE

I tell you guys, take me off your call list.

TELEMARKETER

I'm so sorry sir, our system updates every two weeks.. I'll put a note..

GEORGE

Yeah, yeah you'll put a note on the system not to call me. I know, but no one ever checks the notes before they call.

TELEMARKETER

I'm so sorry sir, I didn't see the note in our system..

GEORGE

You wake me up at the butt-crack of dawn with your calls, asking me for donations. Your Mexican workers are throwing empty Corona bottles in my yard. Why don't you get your money by recycling the bottles in my yard. Better yet, I'll just show up at your office and delete myself from your system.. What was your name?

DIAL TONE SOUND.

George hangs up the phone revealing a slight grin.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

A restored record player flips ON, BIG BAND MUSIC plays.

George opens the near full fridge taking out a prepared plate of bacon and eggs. Moving to the rhythm of the music he dances his way across the kitchen. His stiff joints won't allow him to keep up.

He pours few sanitizer drops into the fish bowl and measures the temperature of the water.

He sets the beta fish bowl on the table as if it were his guest.

The ROARING sound of a bobcat scraping the ground followed by an erupting QUACKING noise disturbs his enjoyment.

He takes a bite of toast and holds a small piece of bread hovering over the fish bowl. The beta sits lays on the bottom of the bowl.

From his pant pocket he takes out a fish food container and dabs a bit of food in the bowl. He impatiently observes.

The fish rests on the bottom.

GEORGE  
Eat Dorothy?

QUACKING/CHAINSAW (heard underwater from fish perspective).

We see look through the window, his glasses magnify his big glaring eyes.

EXT. GEORGE'S FRONT YARD - DAY

George carefully walks down the stairs. He approaches the ducks in the torn muddy pond and flails his arms violently at them.

The two QUACKING ducks don't seem to mind. He picks up a Corona bottle and throws it into the pond. The two ducks fly off into the air.

Holding their shovels, the six man Mexican construction crew snickers and LAUGH pointing at him. Taking notice, George approaches a YOUNG WORKER (18).

GEORGE  
Littering might be encouraged in  
Mexico but it is illegal here.

YOUNG WORKER  
No hablar ingles.

George add-libs his own version of sign language.

GEORGE  
Take your mess somewhere else, no  
one wants you here!

One of the workers makes a comment in SPANISH, the workers  
LAUGH.

George walks up to the bobcat parked on the side of the  
murky pond. He retrieves the keys from the ignition and  
chucks them in the middle of the pond.

He stomps his way up the stairs.

The Young Construction Worker raises his middle finger at  
George's back.

YOUNG WORKER  
Crazy old fuck!

George SLAMS the door and looks through his peephole.

INT. LIVING ROOM -DAY

George sits attentively in his chair polishing a revolver  
with a cloth.

The ALARM CLOCK sounds. He turns it off.

George looks out the window through binoculars and sees:

Three landscapers watching the Young Landscaper  
unsuccessfully fish out the keys with a rake.

George's attention is diverted to a MAIL CARRIER walking up  
his front steps.

He cracks open the door leaving the chain lock ON.

A short, African American, female, Mail Carrier (60s) wears  
a Black sweater with headphones BLASTING and carries a few  
letters in her hand.

MAIL CARRIER  
Good morning George.

She lifts her headphones off.

GEORGE  
Yes it was.. Can I help you?

MAIL CARRIER (CONT'D)  
Your mailbox is down.

GEORGE  
I have a pretty good idea of who  
it was..

She attempts peaking inside the house but, he nudges the door leaving only a sliver to see through.

A loud QUACKING sound interrupts.

MAIL CARRIER  
Everything ok?

GEORGE  
All this.. is upsetting Dorothy.

MAIL CARRIER  
Dorothy stopped getting mail years ago George.

GEORGE  
My beta fish.. She just sits on the bottom of the bowl. Doesn't eat.

MAIL CARRIER  
Maybe your fish just needs a friend? Get it a goldfish to play with?

GEORGE  
You can't put another fish in with a beta. It will kill it.

QUACKING continues.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Shut up ducks.

MAIL CARRIER  
Why don't you try throwing some bread out there?

GEORGE  
Ha, or a bullet.. Why do I smell cigar?

She lifts a cigar from her pocket and offers it to him.

He shakes his head NO.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
No thank you, I don't smoke.

MAIL CARRIER  
My son just had a baby girl  
yesterday.

She holds up her cell phone with a picture of a baby. George waves her off.

GEORGE  
Yeah, I know what a baby looks  
like. My show is almost on, please  
excuse me.

He reaches through the chain locked door and takes the letters.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Thank you.

He shuts the door.

She puts her head phones on.

MAIL CARRIER (OS)  
Have a good day George.

He notices the sticky seal on an envelope is wrinkled as if it had already been opened.

All four letters appear to have been re-sealed.

He tosses the letters on a mountain of unopened mail in his entryway.

He watches her walk down the stairs.

She waves to a landscaper who does not return the gesture.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

George sets the beta fish bowl on a wooden nightstand, twists it facing the fish towards the tv screen.

He rests his old body in the comfortable chair. A click of the remote, the tv signal is snow.

GEORGE  
No.

George presses the button repeatedly with no response. He moves in for a close inspection of the tv adjusting the bunny ears.

He manually presses the button on the tv and smacks the

side.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
If it's not one thing, it's  
another.

The screen goes blank, he checks the power cord, it's plugged in. Furious, he storms into:

THE KITCHEN

He flips through the yellow pages.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

George nervously arranges the pillows on the couch. He paces back and forth on the carpet trail worn from his pacing habit.

His watch reads: 9:59, he lowers the watch revealing the clock on the wall which matches his watch exactly.

His ALARM clock sounds 10:00. He slams the top of the old alarm clock.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

George, sunk in his leather chair watches out his front window.

The sound of a CAR DOOR slamming.

He looks through the peep hole.

He opens the front door to an out of breath, heavy REPAIRMAN (early 40s) standing before him wearing a bluetooth headset.

REPAIRMAN  
George Davey?

GEORGE  
You said you would be here at  
10:00.

REPAIRMAN  
20 minutes late. In my world  
that's early.

Repairman LAUGHS until he notices George's glare.

GEORGE  
Please take off your shoes.

Repairman bends over removing a shoe, he clumsily hops around exposing his love-handles.

Repairman walks scanning the living room.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
It's by the window.

A 20 year old pathetic television balances on a beta max player in a cheap entertainment center. Repairman looks to George as if someone had played a joke on him.

REPAIRMAN  
I'm sorry, I don't work on these tv's.

GEORGE  
Why not?

REPAIRMAN  
No offense, I don't work on tv's this old. Don't have the tools.

GEORGE  
The tools or the brains?

Repairman is caught off guard.

Holding a tv guide George presses the power button on the tv. Repairman studies the back of the set.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
It won't turn ON when I push the button. I only watch Dancing with the Stars re-runs.

Repairman picks up his toolbox.

REPAIRMAN  
They are switching to a digital signal next week, so your analog signal won't work anymore. Plus, man, you could buy two flat screens for the price it would cost for someone to fix this.

GEORGE  
I don't need two or three television sets. My set worked fine for twenty years.  
(beat)  
It just needs a tune-up.

REPAIRMAN  
It doesn't even have cable hook ups. I'm amazed it even has a remote. Listen, there are some great flat screens out there. cheap too.

GEORGE

And what will I do with this one?

REPAIRMAN

I don't know, toss it. It isn't worth anything, five bucks maybe.

GEORGE

Your trying to rip me off!

REPAIRMAN

Have you seen the prices at Walmart?

Repairman looks down at his watch.

GEORGE

Buy new you say. I don't want some cheap complicated television set with a hundred buttons.

A HIP HOP RINGTONE from the Repairman's phone interrupts.

Turning, Repairman knocks the fish bowl off the nightstand to the ground shattering it to pieces. The fish flops on the ground.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Dorothy.

REPAIRMAN

Oh my god I'm sorry, it was an accident.

INT.KITCHEN -MOMENTS LATER

With haste, George sets the fish in a glass of water. He adjusts his glasses and moves his head in for a closer inspection. He looks over the fish as if a surgeon and carefully dips his finger in the water.

GEORGE

She's never been out of her tank before.

REPAIRMAN

Is it gonna be ok? I'll buy you a new one.

George watches the fish swim in the glass of water.

GEORGE  
(steaming)  
See yourself out the front door or  
I will.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SUNSET

In near darkness.

The large grandfather clock on the wall TICKS.

George searches through the nightstand drawer tossing aside prescription pills, he finds a revolver.

He pours the remains of the whiskey bottle into his glass, takes a swig. MURMURS to himself in a drunken stupor hunched over in his chair. He pushes the tv remote. Nothing happens.

GEORGE  
God damn tv.

He throws a book at the tv missing it completely. George LAUGHS hysterically.

QUACKING is heard in the foreground echoing in the night.

A glass cooking bowl of water sits on the night stand, the red beta fish floats on the surface dead.

QUACKING from outside.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
I said quiet!

EXT. FRONT PORCH - SUNSET

George stumbles on his front porch drawing the revolver. He lines a duck in his site and FIRES, GUNFIRE ECHOS. The ducks fly off into the sunset. He squeezes off a second shot, missing.

GEORGE  
Come back. And I won't miss.

LIVING ROOM

George staggers to his chair, holds the revolver on his lap and slumps down. He taps the gun barrel on the side of his head.

A LOUD TELEPHONE RING startles him. He grabs his chest, catching his breath. The phone continues to ring several times.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Hello.

COLLECTOR

Hello, this is Josh with Automated Collection Services. How are you doing this evening?

George looks to the gun resting on the side of his head.

COLLECTOR (CONT'D)

Is George Davey available?

GEORGE

Speaking.

COLLECTOR

There is an outstanding balance due on your American express that is now in our office. The balance is \$8,300. Will you be able to take care of that balance today?

GEORGE

I did not charge \$8,000 dollars. On what? What was the charge?

DOORBELL RINGS.

George sets the phone down.

He leers through the peep hole. He sees a Police OFFICER standing in the doorway with lights flashing in the foreground.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

They're fast.

He conceals the gun in his pocket.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Come back in the morning. I got some illegal Mexicans you can take with you.

OFFICER WEBNER (OS)

Sir, I am Officer Webner, I need you to open the door.

GEORGE

I'm busy, my friend Jack Daniels is visiting from Kentucky.

OFFICER WEBNER (OS)  
I'm not going to ask you again.

George opens the door to a military cut massive Mexican, Officer Mungia.

OFFICER MUNGIA  
You George Davey?

GEORGE  
Christ, this place is turning into Tijuana.

OFFICER MUNGIA  
We received a phone call from one of your neighbors, said they heard gunfire on your property.

GEORGE  
Which neighbors?

OFFICER MUNGIA  
I'm not going to disclose that information.

Officer Webner covers his mouth to avoid George's breath.

GEORGE  
Yes, I was scaring the ducks. They are a public nuisance.

OFFICER MUNGIA  
It is illegal to fire a weapon in city limits.

GEORGE  
I didn't hit them. If I wanted to I would have shot them right between the eyes.

George LAUGHS hysterically. He looks up at the annoyed officer.

OFFICER MUNGIA  
I'm going to have to ask you to come with me. I'm placing you under arrest for discharging a firearm within city limits.

GEORGE  
I will do no such thing, private.

George attempts to shut the door. The Officer grabs his arm gently, turns him around and pats him down. He pulls a revolver from George's pocket.

OFFICER MUNGIA  
Is this the weapon? Do you have  
any other weapons?

The Officer handcuffs him. His drunken struggle is no match  
for the overpowering Officer. George pulls away, falls on  
the stairs slamming his shoulder.

GEORGE  
My arm!

The Officer helps him up off the ground.

INT. POLICE STATION OFFICE - NIGHT

A young attorney, DAN MILLS, opens the door rushing through  
the room carrying a briefcase and laptop. He slams his work  
down on the table exhausted. George wears a sling on his arm  
sitting at the table in the small room.

DAN MILLS  
I'll call you soon.

GEORGE  
Call me. I'm right here.

DAN MILLS  
I will call your wife and let her  
know.

GEORGE  
What in the hell are you talking  
about?

Dan ends the phone call by tapping a button on the side of  
his bluetooth.

DAN MILLS  
Sorry, I was just finishing up  
with a client.

He approaches George.

DAN MILLS (CONT'D)  
George Davis?

GEORGE  
It's DAVEY.

DAN MILLS  
Oh sorry, I had it written wrong.  
I'm Dan Mills, your public  
defender.

Dan offers a handshake. He sees George's sling on his right  
arm. Dan switches to shake with his left but, George

resists.

DAN MILLS (CONT'D)

Your arm ok?

George does not answer.

Dan writes on his tablet.

GEORGE

How old are you?

DAN MILLS

Twenty nine.

GEORGE

You're too young. I need someone experienced.

Dan stares at him awkwardly with an uneasy smile. George stares at him, straight face.

DAN MILLS

(unsure)

You are kidding me right?

The smile on Dan's face disappears.

DAN MILLS (CONT'D)

Sorry, George. Looks like you are stuck with me.. Have a seat.

GEORGE

I'll stand.

DAN MILLS

I am here to help. Have a seat.

GEORGE

Take that thing out of your ear.

Dan glares at him and pulls the bluetooth out of his ear. He pulls the chair out gesturing for George to sit. George remains standing.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

When do I go home?

DAN MILLS

Soon, looking at your file. You are in good shape.

GEORGE

Good shape. Do I look like I am in good shape! Look what he did to my arm.

DAN MILLS

You are a purple heart, with no priors. I understand you didn't have a permit for the gun?

GEORGE

A permit. Yeah, fifty years ago.. I was shooting at..

DAN MILLS

Ducks, yes I know. Had a bit to drink did you?

GEORGE

I don't remember how..

DAN MILLS

It all really doesn't matter what you remember at this point Mr. Davis. What matters is what is on the police report. Now, I can keep you out of jail but the judge will require you to have someone check in on you from time to time. That's our best bet.

GEORGE

I don't need someone to check in on me.

DAN MILLS

You won't have a choice. Now do you have family or a friend that the court can appoint?

GEORGE

No. There is no one.

DAN MILLS

It says here you are married.

George shakes his head NO.

DAN MILLS (CONT'D)

Not a friend or a neighbor?

(beat)

The court will appoint someone.

GEORGE

No, no more intruders.

DAN MILLS

The judge is going to make you.

GEORGE

Then he better send someone who isn't allergic to bullets.

DAN MILLS

It's that kind of talk that will keep you in here. You are looking at jail time, but this can be easily avoided, if you retire your attitude long enough for me to help you.

GEORGE

I have commanded entire fleets in battle. I don't need someone to change my diapers.

DAN MILLS

George, I am trying to help you. Let me do this, this is what I do.. Do you know if any bullets hit the neighbors house?

GEORGE

I wasn't shooting at my neighbors house!

DAN MILLS

Calm, we are going off of what's in the police report.

George views the clock on the wall.

GEORGE

It's time to feed my fish. I'm going home.

DAN MILLS

Today is your birthday George.

George halts, appears confused.

GEORGE

What day is it?

DAN MILLS

May 1st, your birthday.

GEORGE  
How did you know?

DAN MILLS  
I have access to your records.

George backs away.

GEORGE  
You stay out of my god damn files.  
They are private.

DAN MILLS  
It's my job, I'm your attorney.

GEORGE  
This is your one warning.

Dan's eyebrows lift, he writes on the tablet.

George rises.

DAN MILLS  
I need to verify your current  
address?

GEORGES  
My address is..

DAN MILLS  
And, how old are you today?

George gathers his thoughts for a moment. Devastated, he sits down, defeated.

DAN MILLS (CONT'D)  
(reading)  
You are seventy two years old  
tomorrow. The judge will insist  
someone check in on you as a part  
of your probation. And George, I  
thinks it's a good idea.

George heads for the door. Dan stands in his path.

George awkwardly attempts to open the door with his right hand but fails.

DAN MILLS (CONT'D)  
Mr. Davis, I have twenty-eight  
clients right now. Twenty-eight. I  
am very busy, I need you to trust  
me. Ok?

GEORGE

It's Davey, not Davis! There is an "E, Y" you idiot. How can you help me? You are just a kid. You probably still have pimples on your ass.

DAN MILLS

You are wasting my time.

GEORGE

When you are through with me I'll probably end up in shock therapy.

DAN MILLS

Come on George! You are being ridiculous.

(beat)

Are you going to help me out?

Dan raises his left hand to shake George's hand. George denies him. Dan slaps a piece of paper and pen on the table.

DAN MILLS (CONT'D)

Sign here George and you can go home. I will fill you in afterwards.

George reluctantly signs the paper with his bad arm.

DAN MILLS (CONT'D)

Date it.

George looks up at him.

DAN MILLS (CONT'D)

Today's date is: five, one, two thousand ten.

George dates it.

GEORGE

I don't care anymore.

Dan takes the pen and paper from him.

DAN MILLS

It's not up to you anymore.

(beat)

An officer will give you a ride home. I will call you in a couple days. Answer the phone when I call.

Dan places the bluetooth in his ear.

DAN MILLS (CONT'D)  
Everything is going to be ok.  
Trust me.

He presses the button on the bluetooth, exits the room,  
turns the corner.

DAN MILLS (OS) (CONT'D)  
Sorry, I had a client.

INT. GEORGE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

George's old hand turns off the thermostat.

In a daze, he views his reflection dressed in a baggy  
decorated military uniform. His arm, neatly wrapped in a  
sling, struggles adjusting his tie.

He opens the top dresser drawer and digs through a bundle of  
woman's bras and underwear.

He retrieves a full bottle of prescription pills, squints to  
look at the label reads: Dorothy Davey.

EXT. GEORGE'S FRONT YARD - CONTINUOUS

The overgrown jungle of a yard stands out among the houses  
in it's neighborhood.

Mail Carrier walks up the overgrown concrete stairs carrying  
a stack of mail and a card board box as if attempting an  
obstacle course.

INT. GEORGE'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

George draws the shades, the room becomes dark. The clock on  
the wall reads: 10:57. He twists open the full prescription  
bottle and pours them into his palm.

He he removes his glasses, blurry.

The door bell RINGS.

EXT. GEORGE'S FRONT PORCH -CONTINUOUS

Mail Carrier RINGS the doorbell.

The door cracks open with chain still attached. George  
dressed in a decorated military uniform, without glasses,  
peeks through the chain locked door.

MAIL CARRIER  
Good morning George.

GEORGE  
Just put it in my mailbox.

MAIL CARRIER  
Your mailbox is down.

GEORGE  
It's all bills that I'm not  
planning on paying.

MAIL CARRIER  
George, if you don't pay your  
bills I can't keep bringing you  
mail.

GEORGE  
Ok.

She tries to hand him the mail but he makes no attempt to  
accept.

MAIL CARRIER  
Ok, what?

GEORGE  
Ok, just take it all back. I don't  
want it.

She looks at him confused.

MAIL CARRIER  
Why are you wearing a suite?

GEORGE  
Just return it to the sender.

An ALARM CLOCK goes off in the background.

She stares at George awkwardly.

MAIL CARRIER  
Your alarm clock is going off.

She stops him from closing the door.

MAIL CARRIER (CONT'D)  
There are a few letters from the  
court house.. Do me a favor and at  
least take these off my hands.

George takes the chain lock off the door and accepts the  
stack of mail.

GEORGE

Thank you.

MAIL CARRIER

I heard you were arrested..

He shuts the door in her face.

She knocks repeatedly.

MAIL CARRIER (CONT'D)

George, open the door, please..

The door remains closed.

MAIL CARRIER (CONT'D)

It's important. George..

She storms off down the concrete steps kicking an empty corona bottle.

She walks to her sports car, pulls off her US Mail black sweater and throws it in her back seat.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

The clock on the wall reads 11:10am.

He sits back in his chair staring at the spot where his TV used to be.

He lifts the phone off the hook and sets it down. DIAL TONE.

The empty prescription bottle lays across the coffee table.

He flips his record player on: BIG BAND MUSIC PLAYS.

He looks up at the painting of the woman sitting in a rose garden.

He sinks slowly in his chair, his eyes are heavy.

SOUND OF THE PHONE OFF THE HOOK.

The grandfather clock appears to slow down in rhythm.

George's eyes open. He looks over at the card board box near his lamp, (there is no label on the box).

He looks over the unmarked box curiously. He opens it and peers inside seeing a loaf of bread. He closes the box abruptly and pushes it aside.

He rifles through the letters looking at the address posted:

GEORGE DAVEY P.O. BOX 2459

EXT. PARK - MORNING

George hustles down his front steps carrying the cardboard box.

He arrives at the curb where is mailbox used to be. A few small plants and weeds grow in the hole indicating the hole has been there for a while.

He squints down the street with blurry vision.

Taken back, he sees the most fantastic park waterfall flowing into a large majestic pond. Wonderful flowers cover the park.

He walks closer in delight, seeing ducks swimming and two Mexican children skipping rocks into the waterfall.

He sees a mother and it's baby ducks following behind.

George rips open the plastic bag, pulls out a piece of bread and flings it into the pond. The ducks swarm after it.

The boy and girl run over to him and put their hands out for bread.

He becomes dizzy and struggles to keep his eyes open.

He takes a seat on the bench and watches the children throw bread to the ducks. SILENCE.

He fights to keep his eyelids open.

Sweat rolls down his pale face, he holds his stomach in pain.

He leans forward in the bench and vomits.

George curls up on the bench, falls asleep.

The boy and girl, confused, look at each other, something is wrong.

EXT. PARK BENCH -DAY

The young boy and girl are shielded while being led away by their mother.

Four Mexican Landscapers huddle around the park bench looking down at George. One of them nudges the body, no response.

George's pale, lifeless body lays across the bench.

A metal sign engraved on the back of the bench reads:  
"Donated by Dorothy and George Davey."

WHITE LIGHT

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - DAY

Alone, Mail Carrier grievously waits in a chair.

The DOCTOR (50'S) enters the room.

DOCTOR  
Carol?

MAIL CARRIER  
Yes.

He looks up from a clipboard.

DOCTOR  
You're his power of attorney?

She stands.

MAIL CARRIER  
Yes.

DOCTOR  
George is breathing, he suffered a severe stroke due to lack of oxygen to the brain when he stopped breathing. I am waiting on the toxicology report to find out what he took.

MAIL CARRIER  
Is he awake?

DOCTOR  
No. He is in coma-stasis. His brain activity does not show signs of permanent damage, though, I won't know for sure until he regains consciousness.

MAIL CARRIER  
How long will that be?

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

George sleeps in the hospital bed hooked to a breathing respirator and heart monitor.

DOCTOR (VO)

We don't know. Sometimes, they are for a few hours, days, in worst cases it could be years. There is no guarantee he will ever wake up. At this point it is too early to say. Much of it will depend on him..

We draw in looking at George's peaceful eyelids.

INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

A dark room with a spotlight on George wearing a tuxedo and corsage. He pleasantly watches an approaching figure.

DOROTHY (the old woman from the painting) approaches him dressed in a red ballroom dress.

George takes her hand, BIG BAND MUSIC PLAYS.

They begin to dance youthful as ever, the spotlights follow them across the hardwood floor.

A camera crane swoops in and follows them in a close up.

A live audience watches in the foreground.

The couple finishes the dance with a bow to the roaring audience.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

An 8 X 8 photo sits on the night stand next to George's hospital bed.

INSERT PHOTO:

Dorothy and the Mail Carrier, 10 years younger, wearing office attire, coworkers, arms around each other in their office cubical.

A nurse adjusts George's IV unit. He opens his eyes looking up at the nurse.

NURSE

He's awake.

The Mail Carrier, dressed in a business attire sits attentive in a chair beside his bed holding a newspaper. She stands and approaches his bed.

George scans around the room as if he didn't know where he was. He sees the photo on his nightstand, next to it is a red beta fish in a bowl.

He reaches out and takes her hand.

INT. RETIREMENT COMMUNITY - DAY

A humble, new condo retirement home. An elderly woman uses her walker to make her way down the hallway.

A group of bored senior elderly sit at a table playing cards.

BIG BAND MUSIC disrupts their SILENCE, halting the game.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT -CONTINUOUS

A red beta fish sits on a new stereo system.

George's hand adjusts the THUMPING volume of the BIG BAND MUSIC.

He holds CDs swaying to music in his small apartment.

He makes his way in the kitchen cooking salmon on the stove.

KNOCK at the door.

George swings the door open to find four friendly senior citizens standing outside his doorway.

DANIELA (70's) short, Mexican, stomps with a cane down the hallway towards him.

DANIELA

New Guy, turn down the music.

George pokes his head out the door to see her.

GEORGE

(yelling)

What?

DANIELA

Turn it down, you are shaking the pictures on my wall.

GEORGE

Hold on a moment, I have an idea.

George shuts the door in the everyone's face.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT -MOMENTS LATER

A flat screen TV mounted in the updated kitchen has Dancing with the Stars playing. BALL ROOM MUSIC BLASTING.

George dances to the music carrying a big plate of Salmon.

He sits bouncing in his chair. Across from him, the beta fish bowl sits as his guest.

BLACK (All lights off)

(THE POWER IS OUT)

SILENCE

We hear a RUSTLING sound of a fork falling on the ground.

A match is lit, he lights a candle on the table.

We hear a portable TELEPHONE RING, he searches.

Portable phone BEEP ON.

PHONE CONVERSATION:

GEORGE

Hello.

DANIELA

You finally blew the power, Dummy.

GEORGE

Who is this?

She LAUGHS.

DANIELA

Your neighbor, Daniela.

GEORGE

Turn it back on.. I have every right to watch my show while I eat dinner.. If it is a war you are looking for -

DANIELA

(interrupting)

What are you having?

GEORGE

I don't see how that is relevant?  
Salmon.

DANIELA  
What's this show that's so  
important to you?

GEORGE  
Dancing with the Stars.

DANIELA  
I like that show.

GEORGE  
Then you know who won last years  
competition?

DANIELA  
Donny and Kym, I can't remember  
her last name. Johnson or Johnston  
something.

George begins pacing.

GEORGE  
..If you want to.. I have plenty  
of salmon, over here, if you  
haven't eaten yet. Or, if you  
don't like salmon. I have chicken,  
I can make it. Just don't eat the  
salmon in front of Dorothy, it's  
like cannibalism..  
(beat)  
..Hello?

SILENCE

He BEEPS the phone off.

He solemnly sits down at the table.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
(to himself)  
Everybody knows Donny and Kym won.

He twists the fish bowl facing the other direction.

He chews his salmon alone in the candle light.

LIGHTS ON (The power turns back on)

He presses the button on the remote, Dancing with the Stars  
plays on tv.

FADE OUT: