

"BLACK SHADOW"
by
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FADE IN:

EXT. VIEW OF CITY - NIGHT

From a 3rd floor apartment we look out into the urban city. From a distance the SOUNDS OF THE CITY are heard: a CAR ALARM, PASSING TRAFFIC, CARS HONKING, POLICE SIRENS.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

MIGUEL SANTOS, 42, enters through the front door. He sets down his keys and wallet on a table next to the entrance. He continues into the living room.

The faint SOUNDS OF THE CITY continue in the background.

He removes his jacket, sets it on the couch. In front of the couch is the coffee table, which is full of documents, newspaper clippings, and some mug shots. A few empty beer bottles too.

Miguel wears a shoulder holster; he carries a gun.

Miguel approaches a bar cabinet, inside are a variety of alcoholic choices. He prepares a drink, whiskey.

He walks up to the window. Looks down to the city below. As he takes a sip of his drink he notices something outside his apartment. He slowly brings down his glass and takes a closer look.

MIGUEL'S POV - A SHADOWY FIGURE from across the street stands outside below a streetlight looking up towards Miguel. We do not see the man's face, light cast dark shadows disguising it.

Back to Miguel who quickly hides; his back against the wall. He reaches for his gun, unlocks it. He does not remove it from his holster.

He slowly turns back to look outside.

MIGUEL'S POV - The shadowy figure is gone. No one stands outside.

Back to Miguel. He seems wary. Who was that outside? Was he being followed?

FADE TO BACK:

TITLE SEQUENCE

FADE IN:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Miguel lies in bed. Still wearing his cloth. He contemplates.

He slowly drifts into sleep.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK ALLEYWAY - NIGHT (DREAM SEQUENCE)

A loud GUNSHOT is heard, followed by a woman's SCREAM. Everything is blurry and in slow motion.

A WOMAN drops to the ground. She looks up. A SHADOWY FIGURE appears. We do not see his face; dark shadows hide it. The woman shivers. She can't speak.

The shadowy figure approaches slowly, revealing a gun in his hand.

Cut to woman who now manages to SCREAM.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Miguel jumps up from his bed. The SCREAM from the previous scene echo mixing with Miguel's SCREAM. He was having a nightmare. He tries to compose himself.

He looks towards a night table revealing a picture frame with the woman in the dream, SOFIA SANTOS, 35. She is alone in the picture, a head and shoulder shot. She has an endearing smile.

Miguel picks up the picture frame. He sits on the bed, holding it close to him. He misses Sofia.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Miguel enters through the double doors. We follow him as he makes his way through a CROWD OF PEOPLE. Some are filing claims; others await their appointment. POLICE OFFICERS and ADMIN PERSONEL assists them.

Miguel continues, making his way upstairs to the second floor.

He makes his way now to an office. It belongs to:

DETECTIVE MARIO SOLIS, 50. Head of Investigation, Crime Unit. Mario sits on his desk reviewing some documents. Miguel enters the office, doesn't knock.

MIGUEL

He was outside my apartment. That son of a bitch was outside my apartment!

MARIO

(Sarcastically)

Hello to you too, Miguel.

MIGUEL

Mario, don't you understand? He is following me. He took my wife and now he is after me.

MARIO

Calm down Miguel. Look, we don't have anything on this guy yet. I don't think he is stupid enough to go after you.

MIGUEL

Maybe this is revenge. How many scumbags have I put away? I finally pissed off the wrong gang. This is revenge.

(Beat)

We should be looking at...

MARIO

(Interrupts)

I am handling this case, Miguel. You need to let me worry about that. I don't want you loosing sleep over this.

MIGUEL

I... I...

MARIO

You still having the dreams?

Miguel nods. He walks out of Mario's office.

Mario looks concerned for his colleague.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION - LATER

Miguel sits behind in his desk. He has a pile of papers on top of it, unattended. He is deep in thought.

His phone RINGS. He ignores it. Around him are other DETECTIVES working. Miguel seems in his own world.

Suddenly Miguel stands up, grabs his jacket and leaves.

He passes Mario's office.

MARIO
(Yelling)
Miguel. Miguel!

Miguel ignores him. Continues down towards the exit.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Miguel drives out from the police department. He drives his car.

He makes his way through traffic. He is heading to...

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK ALLEYWAY - DAY

Miguel arrives at the entrance of an alleyway. He gets out.

Miguel surveys the alleyway. It looks familiar, it has been replaying in Miguel's mind and in his dreams. Sofia was brutally murdered here.

He looks closer at the area. He studies it carefully.

FLASH CUT:

EXT. BACK ALLEYWAY - NIGHT (DREAM SEQUENCE)

A loud GUNSHOT is heard, followed by a woman's SCREAM. Everything is blurry.

Sofia drops to the ground. She looks up.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK ALLEYWAY - DAY (PRESENT TIME)

Miguel continues to survey the alleyway. He focuses on another spot.

CUT TO:

FLASH CUT:

EXT. BACK ALLEYWAY - NIGHT (DREAM SEQUENCE)

The shadowy figure appears. We see a little more of his face, but remains unrecognizable as light overhead cast dark shadows on it. The dark figure approaches slowly, revealing a gun in his hand.

Cut to Sofia who now manages to SCREAM.

The dark figure raises the gun pointing it towards camera.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK ALLEYWAY - DAY (PRESENT TIME)

Miguel's face is filled with rage. He is determined to find the killer. He looks towards the entrance of the alleyway.

A male figure, JOHN DOE, stands hiding in shadow, looking towards Miguel.

Miguel furrows his brow. He focuses on John Doe, who seems suspicious. He looks familiar too, like the shadowy figure from the dreams.

John Doe casually turns around then darts right off screen.

Miguel pursues after him. As he reaches the entrance of the alleyway, Miguel looks right. John Doe is gone. Miguel runs around the corner, stops.

BLAM, GUNSHOT SOUND. The bullet hits the wall, throwing plaster. Miguel hits the ground. He is startled but not hurt. Miguel gets up and reaches for his police radio. Miguel bounds for Joe Doe, turns corner.

As Miguel runs, he makes a call onto his radio.

MIGUEL

Shots fired. I got suspect on foot. Heading towards an abandon warehouse, east of Break Point near the train tracks.

John Doe runs towards an old abandon warehouse. He climbs over the fence.

MIGUEL

(Continue on radio)

I need back up.

(Beat)

Suspect armed.

Miguel runs; he does not want to lose site of John Doe. He reaches for his gun now.

Miguel hits the fence. He climbs over. As he hits the ground he loses his footing, falls, dropping his gun.

Miguel gets up, picks up his gun and keeps going.

John Doe runs along the side of the warehouse; darts right into an entrance.

Miguel pursues, not far behind.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDON WAREHOUSE - DAY

John Doe runs through the warehouse we follow from behind as he makes his way to an enclosed section of the warehouse.

Miguel has reached the entrance to the warehouse. He enters cautiously, gun up. He spots John Doe running towards the enclosed section.

Miguel makes his way there.

CUT TO:

INT. ENCLOSED SECTION/WAREHOUSE - DAY

Miguel approaches very cautiously, bringing his gun up, hand slightly shaking.

Slowly he surveys the room.

This area is filled with boxes, garbage and large scrap metal. Light barely penetrates through the broken windows. Large patches of shadows fill the room. An easy place to hide.

GUNSHOT SOUND. Bullet hits near Miguel, barely missing him. Showering debris hit Miguel in the face. The top left side of his face is cut. He bleeds slightly.

Miguel catches a glimpse of John Doe as he makes his way inside an adjacent room. Miguel has him cornered now.

Miguel brings his gun up, makes his way inside the room John Doe entered.

Miguel charges through the room, full on...

He bashes through the closed door...

WAREHOUSE/ADJACENT ROOM

Miguel drops to the ground, rolls once. He is inside, gun drawn. He points at all directions, left, right.

MIGUEL'S POV - MOVING. Quickly surveying the room. It is mainly empty, no place to hide. No sign of John Doe.

Miguel's face is of disbelief. He breathes hard. His gun remains drawn pointing up. How can John Doe have escaped? He knows he lost an opportunity.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABANDON WAREHOUSE - LATER

A couple of police cars are parked outside the warehouse. POLICE OFFICERS are talking to themselves. A police RADIO is heard in the background.

Miguel sits outside in the rear of an ambulance. A PARAMEDIC attends him. His face cut opened during the pursuit needs stitching.

Detective Mario Solis arrives. He steps out of the car, makes his way to Miguel.

MIGUEL
Mario, before you start.

MARIO

Jesus Christ Miguel! Why didn't you wait for back up? You could have gotten yourself killed. We are dealing with a serial killer here.

The paramedic continues to attend Miguel. He cleans the side of his face, then places butterfly stitches on the wound.

MIGUEL

I had him. If I waited he would have gotten away.

MARIO

Which is what happened here.

MIGUEL

I had him cornered. I don't know how...

MARIO

Miguel. You are not on this case! I've already made that clear to you. I need you to trust me. We will catch this guy. You need to be patient. We will get him.

(Beat)

Now I am recommending a leave of absence. You need the rest. You haven't taken a day off since Sofia's murder.

Miguel looks at Mario is disbelieve, frustrated. He brushes off the paramedic who is not done treating him.

Miguel gets up.

MIGUEL

I will NOT wait hands-crossed while a killer...a fucking killer roams about.

Miguel storms out.

MIGUEL

(Continue)

I will not wait!

Mario looks frustrated. He knows he cannot stop Miguel from pursuing this case.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

EXT. BACK ALLEYWAY - NIGHT (DREAM SEQUENCE)

A loud GUNSHOT is heard, followed by a woman's SCREAM.

Sofia drops to the ground. She looks up.

The shadowy figure/John Doe appears. We see more of his face. Light from above cast dark shadows on it, but we recognize him from the chase earlier.

John Doe approaches slowly, gun in hand.

Cut to Sofia, she trembles. She is frozen and cannot scream.

John Doe raises the gun pointing it towards Sofia. GUNSHOT heard.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Miguel jumps up from his bed, he's startled. GUNSHOT echoes. He was having a nightmare again. He tries to compose himself.

Miguel gets up from his bed; he is fully clothed. He grabs his jacket and heads out.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Miguel sits at a bar with a glass of beer in front of him. Other CUSTOMERS fill the bar. Miguel sits alone with his thoughts. He takes a sip.

Suddenly Detective Mario Solis joins Miguel. He sits next to him.

MARIO

(To bartender)

I'll have a glass of whiskey on the rocks; make it a Jack Daniel's.

MIGUEL

How'd you know I was here?

MARIO

(Sarcastically)

I didn't. This is my favorite place too.

Miguel doesn't respond. He is not in the mood for joking.

MARIO

(Continue)

Miguel. I know you want more than anything to catch this guy. I have been involved in this case since Sofia's murder 6 months now. I will stop at nothing until he is caught.

Bartender hangs Mario the drink.

MIGUEL

I can't stop these nightmares. They are haunting me. They will slowly drive me crazy. For Sofia, for my sanity I must catch him.

(Beat)

I need to make these nightmares stop.

MARIO

Don't you see Miguel? You are jeopardizing this case. Your involvement will only lead to you getting hurt, or possibly killed. Then I got another case on my lap.

(Beat)

As head of my unit, I must act now for the welfare of our department, for your safety, and for the swift resolution of this case.

MIGUEL

And what actions are those? A forced leave? How good is that going to do?

MARIO

You don't see it now, but a leave will do you some good. Your current state of mind is only clouding your judgment.

MIGUEL

You think I'm crazy.

MARIO

I think you need time off.

MIGUEL

(Not looking at Mario)

I think I want to be left alone.

Mario takes a long sip of his drink. Finishes it, then sets the glass down.

MARIO

You have always been a good friend, Miguel. And the whole department cares very much for you. We're behind you. I hope you recognize that.

Mario sets a few bills on the counter. Then leaves.

Miguel looks straight ahead, sips on his beer until it is all gone. His glass is empty.

BARTENDER (O.S)

Another round Miguel?

Miguel looks up to see the bartender. It is Sofia! She is wearing a black vest and bowtie, typical bartender clothing.

BARTENDER/SOFIA

(With an endearing smile)

How about another round Miguel?

Miguel is shocked. He cannot speak. He looks at his beer. Has he been drinking too much? He glances to look again.

This time the bartender is another woman, ISABELLA, 30's. She is clearly not Sofia, but resembles her.

BARTENDER/ISABELLA.

So how about it Miguel? You up for another round?

Miguel seems confused. He's had enough for tonight. He shakes his head "no thanks".

Miguel drops a few bills on the counter and storms out.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Miguel lies in bed. Still wearing his cloth. Another sleepless night. He contemplates.

He suddenly sits up. His face...like he has remembered something. He gets up, heads to...

LIVING ROOM

Miguel stands next to coffee table. He looks down at it. The table is completely covered with documents, newspaper clippings, and some mug shots.

He stares down.

MIGUEL'S POV - MOVING as he scans the table.

Miguel's eyes focus on a picture hiding behind other documents. The face on the picture is not revealed.

Miguel continues looking down. Hesitation on his part to look at the picture, what will it reveal?

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT/MARIO'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Detective Mario enters his office. Sits on his leather chair. Stares straight. Blank face.

Mario slowly turns his chair 180 degrees. He looks slightly up. Stands up.

He studies a bulletin board full of newspaper clippings, mug shots, and a picture of Sofia. He stares at the board for a while.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Miguel reaches down to pick up the picture. He studies it, the picture is not revealed to us.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT/MARIO'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Detective Mario continues staring at the bulletin board.

Suddenly, Mario's face changes. He leans in closer to the board and squints his eyes. His face changes again.

Mario turns towards a cabinet; next to it is a pile of boxes on top of each other.

He grabs one box labeled "SOFIA SANTOS BOX 12A". He sets it on top of his desk.

He searches inside, pulls a folder out. Sets it down. Opens it, flips through it.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Miguel sets the picture on top of the coffee table, revealing a crime scene photo. It is John Doe/Shadowy Figure. He is on the ground, blood on his face, clearly dead.

Next to the picture is one more. It is Sofia lying on the floor. She is dead.

Miguel is frozen. Little expression on his face.

FLASH CUT:

EXT. BACK ALLEYWAY - NIGHT (FLASHBACK/DREAM SEQUENCE)

A dark alleyway. Tall buildings on each side.

The silhouette of a COUPLE walking towards us is seen. They walk under a light revealing their faces, Sofia Santos and John Doe.

Sofia and John are holding hands. They smile; they are enjoying each other's company.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Miguel seems intense. His dreams are becoming clearer.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT/MARIO'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Detective Mario is flipping through a folder, stops. He's confused.

MARIO

(Whispering to himself)

There are missing documents here.

(Beat)

What?

He looks up. Suddenly, grabs his jacket and storms out.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Miguel is more intense than ever. He has a look of puzzlement, then confusion - finally realization.

He reaches for his gun sitting on the coffee table. He unlocks it.

Slowly raises it towards his temple. He seems distraught. Hands shaking. Eyes tearing.

FLASH CUT:

EXT. BACK ALLEYWAY - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Sofia and John. They continue walking.

A SHADOWY FIGURE appears. It begins walking towards Sofia and John.

Sofia and John are obliviously being followed. They stop. Look at each other. Sofia kisses John. They smile.

The shadowy figure appears partially filling the left side of screen, Sofia and John in foreground. Shadowy figure raises his hand revealing a gun.

GUNSHOT SOUND. John drops to the ground. Sofia SCREAMS. Shadowy figure fills the screen. GUNSHOT HEARD again.

Sofia drops to the ground. She has been shot. She trembles. She looks at herself. She's bleeding.

Shadowy figure approaches, gun in hand.

We see a little of his face, it is unrecognizable as light from above cast dark shadows on it.

Sofia looks up towards shadowy figure. Tears in her eyes. She is in agony.

SOFIA

(Begging, barely able to speak)

No. Please.

PAN UP on shadowy figure. As he takes a step forward overhead light helps to reveal his face. It is Miguel! Gun in hand he approaches closer to Sofia.

MIGUEL

Why? Why would you?

Sofia is trembling even more.

SOFIA

I'm sorry, Miguel.

Miguel raises gun towards Sofia. FLASH OF WHITE. GUNSHOT heard.

FADE TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (PRESENT TIME)

GUNSHOT from previous scene echoes.

CLOSE UP on Miguel's face. He lies on the floor. Blood dripping down his forehead. A puddle of blood on the floor. He's dead.

LOUD KNOCKING on the door.

MARIO (O.S)

MIGUEL! MIGUEL!

PAN SHOT from Miguel's face pass the puddle of blood. Continue PAN pass the floor slowly PAN UP towards the coffee table.

LOUD BANGS on the door.

MARIO (O.S)

(Continue)

Miguel, open up. MIGUEL!

Continue PAN pass the coffee table towards a side table next to the couch.

LOUD BANGS on the door persist.

PAN stops on a picture frame of Sofia. The head and shoulder shot we have seen before.

DOLLY IN towards Sofia's picture.

She smiles, but what was once an endearing smile appears more vengeful now.

Continue slow DOLLY IN until we..

FADE TO BLACK:

END CREDITS