

BLISS

Written by  
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**EXT. NEW YORK CITY / ALLEY - DAY**

Dead silence emanates from the city that never sleeps. No stray cats or fat rats in sight.

Just when it seems this is going to be an avant-garde flick, a big, BADASS BIKER limps into FRAME.

FIONA (V.O.)

No one knows where it started.

The Badass Biker looks back, spooked, trips into a trash can.

Runs into a fence, yells in frustration.

His PURSUERS kick a soda can, making a game of it.

The Badass Biker flicks open his pocket knife, faces them.

No more running. *Time to dance.*

Four NUNS, all smiling super wide, surround him.

FIONA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

One day, all over the world, people woke up and couldn't stop smiling.

The Badass Biker SLASHES the nearest Nun's arm.

She dips her fingers in the blood, paints a smiley face in her palm, waves at the Badass Biker.

The Nuns close rank. *Have mercy!*

The Badass Biker loses his nerve, drops the knife.

He crosses himself, screams.

The Nuns, smiles never wavering, attack!

Biting/Punching/Clawing/Kicking the crap out of him.

FIONA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

If you were unlucky enough to cross them, they turned psycho, tore you apart, leaving nothing but a carved grin on your face.

One of the Nuns picks up the Badass Biker's knife, carves a permanent smile into his face.

FIONA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 If you're lucky you die afterwards.  
 If not, welcome to Club Bliss.

The Nuns depart, leaving the mutilated Biker behind.

**EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY**

The Nuns walk arm in arm past CHILDREN hanging off the neck, arms and legs of a SCREAMING COP...

Nod to a WOMAN painting a smiley face in blood on the sidewalk while her BOYFRIEND bleeds out...

Finally past a rabid, slaphappy CROWD dragging a TERRIFIED FAMILY out of their vehicle...

One of the Nuns spots an ELDERLY MAN with a duffel bag over his shoulder shuffling towards an apartment building.

The Elderly Man smiles at the Nun, crosses the street.

FIONA (V.O.)  
 I used to hate family game night before all this. Now I'd give anything to have those mundane moments back. Yeah, we were one of those kind of families.

**INT. THE MARTIN'S APARTMENT - DAY**

FIONA MARTIN, 20s, struggles to maintain a stiff poker face alongside her little brother, BILLY, 16, too cool for this, and her Laura, LAURA, 40s, the serious one.

Fiona's dad, MIKE, 40s, the goofball, draws what can only be described as a Pokèmon/road kill hybrid on a Pictionary board and mimes whatever the heck it is. He points to Fiona, who bursts into laughter.

FIONA  
 I can't even!

MIKE  
 Come on. It's a jellyfish!

BILLY  
 No way.

LAURA  
 What?

They all laugh.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
 Hey. I went to art school.

LAURA  
 I'll hang it up on the fridge.

MIKE  
 Really?

LAURA  
 No.

The family's all laughs.

FIONA (V.O.)  
 And for a long time, that became  
 our lives. Barricaded inside our  
 home like so many others, thinking  
 it would blow over. We were wrong.

Someone KNOCKS on the door. Everyone goes dead silent. They  
 compose themselves, smile wide.

Another KNOCK. Louder this time. No one moves.

A third KNOCK. Angry, insistent...

Mike grips a knife, hides it behind his back. Opens the door  
 with a smile. ARTIE, 70s, paranoid since the '60s, smiles  
 back. He's the Elderly Man from earlier.

ARTIE  
 Why the long face?

Mike relaxes, lets Artie in, locks the door.

LAURA  
 What the hell, Dad?

ARTIE  
 Love you too.

Artie hugs Laurie.

ARTIE (CONT'D)  
 That was rough. Thought my dentures  
 were gonna fly out any second.  
 Gather round, kids. Gramps came  
 bearing gifts.

Artie opens his duffel bag, revealing bottled water/canned  
 food/snacks/medical supplies inside. Billy and Fiona hug  
 Artie, grab some chips and candy bars.

MIKE  
I could've gone with you, Artie.

ARTIE  
No offense, Mike, but you'd have  
only slowed me down.

MIKE  
I'll just be over here in the  
useless corner.

LAURA  
Don't get lost.

MIKE  
Everybody's a comedian.

LAURA  
Not everyone.

Mike mimes knifing himself in the heart.

**INT. THE MARTIN'S APARTMENT - DAY**

"TWO MONTHS LATER"

The family, minus Artie, play Monopoly by candle light to  
pass the time. Multiple board games lie in the corner.

The family's on edge from being cooped up so long, their  
movements monotonous. Laura drinks cheap wine, massages her  
head. Mike, tired eyed, full beard, lazily rolls the dice.

FIONA  
I'm gonna grab a soda.

BILLY  
You... just had a soda.

FIONA  
And now... I'm having another one.

MIKE  
Guys...

BILLY  
Mom said we're rationing!

FIONA  
It's just a damn soda!

Laura throws over the Monopoly board.

MIKE (CONT'D)  
Was it your turn?

Mike grins. Laura laughs. Billy and Fiona join in.

LAURA  
We'll go on a supply run first  
thing tomorrow.

Artie enters, grim faced.

ARTIE  
Don't bother. Those blissful  
bastards just burned down the  
grocery store.

The Martins deflate.

**INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Fiona and Billy play poker at a table. Laura sits across from Artie, who's having coffee and a cigarette. Mike paces.

ARTIE  
It's spreading. Reports are coming  
in from all over the country now.

Mike eases into a chair by Laura, devastated.

MIKE  
So that's it. We have to go.

FIONA  
What? Where?

MIKE  
No clue, but we can't stay here.

ARTIE  
There's been a few rumblings of a  
safe haven across the sea.

LAURA  
What good will that do if this  
virus is airborne?

ARTIE  
It's better than nothing.

LAURA  
Okay, so where?

ARTIE

Hawaii.

MIKE

Kids, pack your surf boards!

LAURA

You're joking at a time like this?

MIKE

Honey, right now that's all I've got. You're a doctor, Artie served in the war... I made funny noises and observations on stage.

ARTIE

I guess.

LAURA

Occasionally.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Et tu, Laura?

Laura shrugs.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Alrighty then! When do we leave?

ARTIE

Crack of dawn. Let's pray.

They join hands, bow their heads. Except Billy, who smiles...

#### **INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Fiona lumbers from the restroom, zombie-like, passes her parents' room, hears BOUNCY BOUNCY sounds. *Oh jeez...*

#### **INSIDE**

Billy's bouncing on the bed over Mike and Laura, smiling, knife in hand. Their BLOOD SEEPS through the bed sheets.

Fiona trembles.

BILLY

Fi... Why aren't you smiling?!

Billy leaps off the bed, stabs at Fiona!

She slams the door in his face, runs down the hall.

**IN THE KITCHEN**

Fiona searches for a weapon, finds something in a drawer.

Billy creeps around the corner, grinning.

FIONA  
Billy, don't!

WHAM! Artie BREAKS a chair over Billy's back.

Billy no sells it, STABS Artie in the chest.

Raises the knife to finish Artie off...

BLAM! Billy drops dead beside Artie.

Fiona, smoking gun in hand, slides to the floor.

ARTIE  
Hey, kid.

Fiona stumbles over to Artie.

ARTIE (CONT'D)  
I want you to have this. Take it.

Artie hands over a boat key.

ARTIE (CONT'D)  
Get to the harbor. Find "My Better  
Half." You have your grandmother's  
eyes. Did I ever tell you --

Artie closes his eyes, give sup the ghost. Fiona cries.

**LATER**

Fiona, barely holding it together, duffel bag over her shoulder, stands by the door. She looks back at the Monopoly box, stuffs it in the bag.

FIONA (V.O.)  
Everyone I've ever known is dead.  
(a beat)  
Or worse.

Fiona processes that a beat, presses on.

FIONA (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 The Bliss Virus shows no signs of  
 slowing down and with masks  
 outlawed by the masses my face  
 hurts like hell from smiling all  
 the damn time.

Fiona takes a deep breath, smiles wide, exits.

**INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - DAY**

Fiona forces herself not to run, keeps right on smiling as she passes the roaming INFECTED.

A MAN rushes out of his apartment right behind Fiona, blindly swinging a baseball bat into the CROWD. They swarm. Fiona blinks away tears, enters an elevator as the Man SCREAMS.

**INT. ELEVATOR - DAY**

Fiona sobs. The doors open and Fiona quickly plasters on a smile as an INFECTED FAMILY, not unlike her own, cram into the elevator. If they look familiar, it's because they're the family pulled from their vehicle earlier.

They all stare at Fiona with unnerving, unflinching grins. The youngest of the bunch, a precocious LITTLE GIRL, hands on her hips, head bobbing from side to side, waits for Fiona to break. *Come on, come on. Cry. Cry! I dare you!* Kids. (-\_-)

The elevator stops and after an agonizing beat, the Little Girl and her Family depart.

Fiona leans on the wall. Massages her face.

**EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY**

Madness like before. A Kid wearing a cop hat and a badge skips down the block... The Blood Artist admires her handy work... The Forever Happy Family head into a restaurant.

FIONA (V.O.)  
 I'm headed to a safe haven in  
 Hawaii. Hope to see you there.  
 Until then, remember to smile...  
 Till it hurts.

"When You're Smiling" plays as Fiona walks past the Infected, then us, all smiles.

CUT TO BLACK.