

El Portero  
Written By  
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FADE IN:

EXT-COASTAL TOWN-NIGHT

The clouds cover the sky so the modest town is eerily dark. To top it off, there isn't a person in sight, making it intensely quiet. The only noise that can be heard is the sound of the waves crashing upon the beach.

Suddenly, the sound of a man's voice breaks the silence. MARNER, mid-forties, trudges through the darkness as he woefully talks on the phone.

MARNER

Nope, no developments yet. Looks like I'm gonna be here longer than expected.

Marner sporadically, and frustratingly, runs his hand through his hair and rubs his eyes as he speaks.

There's a pause as the person on the other line talks.

MARNER

I don't know. This fucker's careful. We don't have any leads. Could be months.

Another pause.

MARNER

I wish I could, honey. But you know I can't give you any details.

Pause.

MARNER

Can you put Ellie on?

There's a pause as the person on the other line puts ELLIE on.

MARNER

(enthusiastically high pitched)  
Hey Ellie! How are you?

Pause.

MARNER

Yeah, I miss you too.

Pause.

(CONTINUED)

MARNER

Oh wow! That sounds like so much fun!

Pause.

MARNER

Well I'm gonna work extra hard so I can get back home as soon as possible.

Pause.

MARNER

I love you too. Can you put Mommy back on.

Pause.

MARNER

Ok I will.

Pause.

MARNER

Love you too, bye.

Marner hangs up the phone and continues to walk through the empty town.

Eventually, he reaches a bar and walks inside.

INT-BAR-NIGHT

The dimly lit bar is as dead as the town. The only occupants are the BARTENDER, who is nonchalantly rubbing glasses with a rag, and an ELDERLY MAN, who is inconspicuously sipping his drink at the end of the bar.

As soon as Marner sits down, the bartender walks over to him.

BARTENDER

Qué deseas?

MARNER

Un whisky. Por favor.

The bartender nods and prepares Marner's drink. Right when the bartender puts the drink in front of Marner, DARWIN, late twenties, walks into the bar. He is a good looking young man, with defined facial features and a complementary five o'clock shadow beard. With confidence, he walks

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through the bar and sits on the second seat to the left of Marner.

DARWIN  
Una cerveza.

The bartender nods and puts a bottle of beer in front of him.

Darwin glances at Marner for a few seconds.

DARWIN  
(to Marner)  
Cómo estás.

Darwin's accent is thick.

MARNER  
Bien. Tú?

DARWIN  
You're not from around here, are you?

MARNER  
(Laughingly)  
Am I that bad?

DARWIN  
No, no. It's the accent.

MARNER  
Ah. So I'm a distinguishable gringo?

Darwin laughs loudly.

DARWIN  
Más o menos.

Marner laughs in return. He then stretches his hand out to Darwin.

MARNER  
I'm Marner, by the way.

DARWIN  
Marner, I'm Darwin. Nice to meet you.

MARNER  
Likewise.

Marner downs the last of his Whiskey.

MARNER  
(To the bartender)  
Otro, por favor.

The bartender walks over to Marner, takes his glass, and brings him another drink.

DARWIN  
So, Marner, what brings you here?  
Business or pleasure?

Marner takes a large sip of his Whiskey.

MARNER  
A lot more business than pleasure.

DARWIN  
Sounds like you've been here for a while.

MARNER  
Seven weeks.

DARWIN  
Ugh. That's a long time to be away from home.

Marner takes another sip of his Whiskey.

MARNER  
It sure is.

DARWIN  
Any family back home?

MARNER  
A wife and a daughter.

DARWIN  
How old?

MARNER  
She just turned five. I wasn't there for that, of course.

DARWIN  
That's hard.

MARNER  
Yeah. It's fucking torturous.

Marner takes another small sip.

DARWIN  
So what do you do?

MARNER  
I work for the FBI.

DARWIN  
Oh wow! Like a special agent?

MARNER  
Yep. Special Agent Marner.

DARWIN  
And what kind of business does an  
special agent have here?

MARNER  
I'm investigating El Portero.

DARWIN  
(Confused)  
El Portero? The gatekeeper?

MARNER  
You haven't heard? It's national  
news.

DARWIN  
No. I suppose I'm out of the loop.

MARNER  
He's a serial killer. We've  
connected eight murders around here  
to him.

DARWIN  
Oh I think I've heard of a few  
murders but I didn't know they're  
connected.

MARNER  
Yeah. All eight of the victims  
were Americans, stabbed once in the  
midsection, and dumped into the  
ocean. Each of the bodies were  
found washed up on beaches a few  
days after they were murdered.

DARWIN  
(Taken back)  
When were these?

MARNER

The first one was seven months ago  
and the last one was a week ago.

DARWIN

Is anyone taking credit for the  
murders?

MARNER

Not yet. Some serial killers like  
to kill for the notoriety, and  
others like to kill for the  
pleasure. We think he's the latter  
of the two.

Both of them are silent. Darwin intensely stares into the  
distance.

DARWIN

Any suspects?

MARNER

(Laughingly)

Unfortunately, that information is  
top secret.

DARWIN

(Sarcastically)

Oh, top secret! Excuse me, Mr.  
Bond.

Marner laughs.

MARNER

Yup. I can only tell you the public  
information.

Mariners finishes his drink.

MARNER

(To the bartender)

Otro por favor.

The bartender takes Marner's drink and puts another in front  
of him.

Marner takes a sip from his new whiskey.

DARWIN

So, Marner, why is an American FBI  
agent investigating a crime here.

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MARNER

American victims warrant an  
American investigation.

DARWIN

And how is this American  
investigation going?

MARNER

What do you mean?

DARWIN

Well, this guy has been at large  
for seven months. I don't mean to  
be insensitive, but it doesn't  
sound like the investigation is  
going too well.

Marner takes another sip.

MARNER

What can I say? He's careful, I  
guess. He never stays in the same  
place for too long, he doesn't  
leave prints. He's a fucking ghost  
and we can't find him.

Darwin displays a very subtle smile.

DARWIN

Come on, tell me, do you have any  
suspects?

MARNER

Man, I can't--

DARWIN

Come on, Marner. You don't have to  
tell me who. I just wanna know if  
you have any at all.

MARNER

Why do you wanna know so bad?

DARWIN

This shit is like NCIS in real  
life. It excites me! I'm just  
curious.

Marner takes a sizable sip from his whisky.

DARWIN

Come on.

MARNER

Alright. We had a suspect. There was a record of him buying a knife that matched the stab wounds and he lived close to the first murder, but his alibis checked out. We had to let him go.

DARWIN

Do you think he was El Portero.

MARNER

Honestly, no. The only thing we had on him was the knife, and it was a Gerber! Millions of those knives are made each year!

DARWIN

So why did you guys bring him in?

MARNER

El Portero killed six people before we even had a suspect. I think we brought this guy in just so we could say we were making progress.

Marner chugs the last of his whisky. He looks at the bartender and quickly raises his hand. The bartender immediately fills him another drink.

DARWIN

So you just think he's a lunatic, killing people just for the fun of it.

MARNER

Well he's only targeting Americans, so we think he's just a radical nationalist. That's why we call him El Portero, the Gatekeeper. He's trying to keep Americans out of this country.

Darwin subtly nods in agreement.

DARWIN

So do you ever think you're gonna catch this guy.

Marner pauses as he thinks.

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MARNER

He's careful. He doesn't make mistakes. If he continues to do what he's been doing, I don't think we're gonna catch him.

Marner takes another sip.

MARNER

(cont'd)

So I guess that means I'm gonna be staying in this hellhole for a while longer.

DARWIN

Its not that bad here.

MARNER

Anywhere away from your family is a hellhole.

DARWIN

Well, you never know. Maybe something will happen.

Marner chugs the last of his drink.

MARNER

Hopefully.

Marner takes his wallet out of his pocket, puts some cash on the bar, and puts the wallet back into his pocket. He then stands up out his seat.

MARNER

It was nice meeting you, Darwin.

Marner sticks his hand out towards Darwin and Darwin shakes it.

DARWIN

It was nice meeting you too, Marner. I'm sure we'll see each other again.

MARNER

Alright.

Marner waves to the bartender and then makes his way towards the door.

## EXT-COASTAL TOWN-NIGHT

As soon as Marner exits the bar, he takes a right, walks down the block, and then takes another right onto the street perpendicular.

This street is just as quiet as the rest of the town. The only thing in sight is an old beater car parked at the side of the street, which Marner glances at as he walks past it.

Suddenly, Darwin's voice is heard yelling in the distance.

DARWIN  
(in the distance)  
Marner!

Marner stops walking as he hears this.

Darwin, jogging, rounds the corner onto the street and makes his way towards Marner.

DARWIN  
Marner. You left your wallet in  
the bar!

MARNER  
Really? Could of sworn I grabbed  
it.

Marner looks down and begins fumbling through his pockets. Out of his right pant pocket he pulls his wallet.

As Marner looks up, Darwin, who is now just inches away from him, SHOVES A KNIFE into his mid section, causing blood to splatter around the premises.

Marner lets out a desperate gasp as Darwin lowers him to the ground. Darwin leaves Marner there, walks back to the car, which is only about ten feet away, and opens its trunk.

Darwin walks back to Marner, who is still gasping for air, picks him up, and loads him into the trunk. He then closes the trunk, gets into the drivers seat, and takes off towards the coast.

## EXT-REMOTE ROAD-NIGHT

Not a car or person is in sight as Darwin parks his car at the side of the road. The only noise that can be heard is the sound of the waves.

Darwin gets out and opens the trunk, where Marner lays drenched in his own blood.

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Swiftly, Darwin lifts Marner out of truck and begins walking away from the road. As he walks, the sound of the waves becomes louder.

Eventually, he reaches the edge of a cliff overlooking the ocean. He sets Marner down at the very edge (on his side, facing the ocean). Moments after, Marner's phone begins vibrating in his pocket.

Darwin takes the phone out of Marner's pocket and see's that JANE is calling. A picture of Marner, Jane, and Ellie all smiling with their faces close together is displayed on the screen as the phone continues to ring (since that is the picture that Marner assigned to Jane's contact).

After looking at the phone for a few seconds, Darwin presses "decline" and places it back into Marner's pocket.

Darwin then puts his right boot onto Marner's back, and kicks him off the side of the cliff.

Darwin watches as Marner's limp body plunges into the water. After staring at the water for a few seconds, he turns around and begins to walk back to his car.

FADE OUT.

THE END