



by

Sex Machine

Story by

Sex Machine & Pete Bottoms

OVER BLACK

MAN (V.O.)

It's okay. You can talk to me.

A long beat.

MAN (V.O.)

I'm a good guy.

(beat)

Are you hungry?

FADE IN:

EXT. SMALL PLAYGROUND - DAY

Gray clouds roll across the sky.

A group of YOUNG CHILDREN play on an old jungle gym, giggling as they chase each other around. Not a care in the world.

SLOW PAN over to a THIN MAN, 38, sitting alone on a bench.

(NOTE: His face will remain unseen, but we'll catch multiple glimpses of a slight widow's peak.)

He watches as the children play amongst themselves. In particular, he watches a SCRAWNY BOY, 7.

The Scrawny Boy looks over at the Thin Man, almost as if he can feel him watching.

MAN (V.O.)

You like chocolate, pal?

The Thin Man raises a hand, waves with his bony fingers.

INT. POLICE STATION - CASTLE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The sparsely furnished room is messy and cluttered.

Wrapped in a blanket, the Scrawny Boy sits on his distressed MOTHER's, 33, lap. Both of their eyes are red from crying.

She hugs her son tight, rubs his shoulders in a desperate attempt to comfort him.

They sit across from Detective RICK CASTLE, 47, a chubby man with a bald spot, who sits behind his desk. He has a calm, warm demeanor about him.

Rick opens the top drawer in his desk, reaches inside.

RICK
I love chocolate.
(motions toward his gut)
Obviously. Heh.

The Scrawny Boy's eyes light up as Rick pulls out a chocolate bar, hands it to the Mother.

Rick gives the Scrawny Boy a warm smile as the Mother unwraps the candy with shaky hands. She's clearly distraught.

RICK
You know, I think you might just be
the bravest little guy I've ever met.

The Mother hands her son the chocolate. He meekly nibbles away at the candy, like a squirrel with a nut.

EXT. SMALL PLAYGROUND - DAY

The Scrawny Boy moves away from the jungle-gym and the other children, walks over to a water fountain.

RICK (V.O.)
You think you can be brave just a
little bit longer and answer some
questions for me?

As he bends over to get a drink, the Thin Man is revealed to approaching him from behind.

RICK (V.O.)
Do you think you can you remember what
he looked like?

INT. POLICE STATION - CASTLE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

A POLICE COMPOSITE ARTIST (P.C.A.), 30, a small black man with glasses, sits beside the Scrawny Boy and his Mother.

He puts the finishing touches on his sketch.

Rick still sits behind his desk. He sips on a cup of coffee.

The P.C.A shows his sketch to the Scrawny Boy and his Mother.

ON THE SKETCH PAD: An average looking middle-aged man with a distinct widow's peak.

The Scrawny Boy takes one look at the picture before burying his head into his Mother's arms.

Rick gives a slight, off-handed nod to the P.C.A., signals that his work is done.

The P.C.A. quietly leaves the room.

EXT. SMALL PLAYGROUND - DAY

The Scrawny Boy finishes drinking from the water fountain, dries his mouth off with the sleeve of his shirt.

Birds CHIRP O.S.

RICK (V.O.)

I can only imagine what you must be going through, ma'am. It's going to be hard, but you are going to have to stay strong.

The Scrawny Boy glances up at a flock of passing birds in the sky. Just then--

Bony fingers wrap around his shoulder. All the color in the child's face flushes away.

INT. POLICE STATION - CASTLE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

As the Mother does her best to comfort her crying son, Rick leans forward in his seat, a look of sincerity on his face.

RICK

I promise you, Miss Gunn.
(dead serious)
We'll find him.

The Mother kisses her child on the top of his head, then looks to Rick with misty eyes. Tears roll down her cheeks.

RICK (CONT'D)

You two head on home and get some rest, okay? I'll handle it from here.

MOTHER

Thank you, Detective.

Rick smiles and nods.

The Mother forces a smile. Holding her son tight against her body, she stands and moves toward the door.

MOTHER
(to her son)
Let's go, Michael.

As the Mother carries her son, MICHAEL GUNN, out of the office, the traumatized boy looks over her shoulder, at Rick.

CLOSE ON Michael's puffy face. There is an undeniable darkness behind the traumatized child's eyes.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. LARGE PLAYGROUND - DAY

CLOSE ON MICHAEL GUNN's, 36, adult face. He's a gaunt man with a sharp pencil mustache and deep widow's peak. The darkness remains behind his eyes.

He stands in the shadows of a large oak tree, watches with lecherous eyes as--

A large group of YOUNG CHILDREN run and play amongst each other on the massive jungle-gym.

It's a picturesque summer day. Not a cloud in the sky.

One of the children seems to have caught Michael's eye.

Just beside the jungle-gym, JAMES MORGAN, 38, an athletic man, pushes his son, NATHAN MORGAN, 8, a mini version of his father, on a swing. They smile and laugh.

NATHAN
Higher! Push me higher, Dad!

Michael admires Nathan from afar, with a sick fascination.

FADE OUT.