

L O V I N G M A R Y

Written by

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FADE IN.

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE/DINING ROOM - NIGHT

FAWN, early 30s, handsome and appealing in a dry sort of way, is seated at the dinner table. His eyes are averted across the room, and he fidgets with cutlery.

MARY, a pregnant young woman in her late 20s, comes from the kitchen holding two plates of food.

FAWN (V.O.)
Amid the elixir she needs,

She places one plate in front of Fawn and limps on to take a seat across him. She settles and smirks at him.

FAWN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Hating her is a ferocious deed.

MARY
(re: food)
It's going to get cold before you know it.

FAWN
I think I'm going to have to--

MARY
You've never turned down your favorite, even when you're full.

FAWN (V.O.)
Nerds that discuss Harry Potter movies in their little sidebar conversations at social gatherings, say elixir is something that cures all evil. I used to believe in magic. I believed hope and faith could abracadabra you out of a real mess.

Fawn gives up and attempts to force a smile but fails.

FAWN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
If magic was ever real, it probably died when a wizard's wand failed to cough out the gold sparks when he pointed it to Mary. And abracadabra became just another word, or more fitting: gibberish.

He takes a bite on the meat, slow, tense, and unsure. He chews.

FAWN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Loving Mary is worse than death,
because unlike death, you get to
live through Mary's love.

And swallows. He closes his eyes.

BLACK. Over black--

Super Title: L O V I N G M A R Y

TOM (V.O.)
Most writers use a pseudonym,

INT. AIRPORT/ BAGGAGE CLAIM AREA - DAY

TOM, 30s, is a hyper and nerdy guy too old for his behavior, in a black suit and spectacles. He waves at someone offscreen.

TOM (V.O.)
Mostly when they change genres, or
sometimes when they want to avoid
embarrassment.

It's Fawn in a golf vacation outfit, his face buried under a cap and black shades. He notices Tom's hype waves in-between the crowd.

He smiles and takes his shades off and walks to him.

INT./EXT. TOM'S CAR - DAY

Tom is driving and Fawn is in the backseat glancing at the impressive city infrastructure passing by the window. The reflections sweep on the body of the car just as in the window.

TOM
I know, but Fawn Johnson? Why
aren't you changing it this time
around?

FAWN
(distant)
You are supposed to edit my
manuscript, not my pen name.

TOM
 Luckily, I'm a god sent editor.
 Shout when you're in writers block.

Fawn gazes at the rear mirror.

FAWN
 And an author of my statue can't
 deal with writer's block?

Tom is startled by Fawn's reflection in the mirror.

TOM
 Fair enough.

EXT. TOM'S HOUSE/ VERANDA - DAY

Tom is looking abroad at the view of his yard, seated. He is not as hype as the previous scene, stressed rather.

Alongside him is DETECTIVE BO, middle aged black man with a bush of beard. He's holding a stack of stapled paper, the manuscript. It has a title on the cover: LOVING HER, by Fawn Johnson.

He has placed a finger in the middle of the pages to mark the page he's on.

TOM
 He was adamant about this book's
 pen name though... How much did you
 read already?

BO
 I finished the prologue last night.

TOM
 With that pace detective, it puts
 the case in the fog. They haven't
 even met yet.

BO
 I'm well aware, but I've come here
 to chat about the man today. What
 instantly flashes when I say Fawn
 Johnson?

TOM
 (sigh)
 Dedication, Fawn is loyal to his
 craft.

BO

Too much dedication is dangerous, too loyal ends up becoming an obsession. Did you two ever have your differences, any?

TOM

I don't think anything ever qualified as an argument between us. Well, of course there was... not sure if it's important it's probably nothing.

BO

Please, it's the often-overlooked details that are crucial.

TOM

We talked about what he should do to overcome his writing block, which was shocking because he didn't really strike me as a writer that could succumb to writer's block.

BO

Why so?

TOM

Because of his dedication, the reason he never runs out of words is that he really is the person he's writing about. All the time he isn't writing the story in some character's point of view, but his. He becomes his characters.

BO

If you're going to tell the story of a rapist, why don't you rape people yourself.

TOM

What?

BO

It is just some article I read two days ago about his work; people really worship him. All I'm saying is if Fawn never punched the President, he wouldn't write about it. Because he doesn't know what it feels like.

TOM

I don't think it's literal to that extent, because after all, it is still fiction.

BO

That's what I really don't understand, does Fawn Johnson have boundaries?

TOM

He never takes it too far if that's what you're asking me.

BO

I'm not quite sure that that's the case. The man has history, doesn't, he?

Tense beat.

BO (CONT'D)

What about the exercise you gave him to pull him out of the unexpected writer's block?

TOM

Advice he took at last despite his stubbornness, I was quite impressed really...

INT. FAWN'S SUV LEXUS - NIGHT

The car is parked. Flooding lights from outside and distant loud music from the club.

FAWN (V.O.)

It's hard to start a story without an inspiration.

Sweaty hands hold a pen and a scribbler up against the steering wheel. It's Fawn, and he looks like he's been there the whole day.

He's disgusted, in his reflection on the mirror, by his few days stubble that he wishes he could smudge off with his hand.

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

And it's embarrassing to have writer's block before you even start.

On the passenger seat is a paged magazine, an article with a blazing caption "WRITER'S BLOCK?" on the opened page. The scribbler page is blank.

He closes the scribbler and glances outside through the window at the club. The book slips from the loose grip of his hands, and falls into the foot-well.

He stares down.

FAWN

Great.

FAWN (V.O.)

So, yeah! I took Tommy's advice.

He quickly fixes himself up looking in the rear mirror, and he vacates the car shortly after. The door shuts.

INT. CLUB - NIGHT

A loud dim lit club packed with people limping to the Afro-tech music, and some screaming in awe, shirtless. Strippers on poles, and waitresses in revealing outfits.

Fawn shuffles his way to the bar, hitting shoulders and stomping on people's feet. He finds his seat at the bar, and-

FAWN

Water please.

To the barman behind the bar. The barman takes a beat before he nods to the order.

Fawn turns in his stool to survey around the club. He notices most people have company, and he chuckles to his failure to blend in.

Then--

FAWN (V.O.)

Everybody was dancing except them.
Everybody was hugging and kissing
except them.

He notices a man in his 30s and a woman in her late 20s in an inaudible argument at the corner.

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

Nobody was arguing but them.

He focuses on the young lady. In his separate world, he's questioning her beauty.

FAWN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And why do the wicked ones have the
prettiest faces?

The woman folds her coat and starts towards Fawn, who can't take his eyes off her.

She's wearing the revealing outfit like the rest of the waitresses - she works here. On the way, when she catches Fawn's drooling gaze, he quickly turns back at his water.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
It's rude to stare.

Fawn turns to face her, beside him where she's seated. It's Mary, and she's as perfect as the sunset's view. Except one thing, she has a hint of a bruise that she tried to mask with makeup.

FAWN
Rude, nice to meet you, I'm Fawn.

Without bothering to look at him--

MARY
That won't make me come over at
your house.

FAWN
What will?

MARY
Nothing, you don't need a girl like
me.
(then she turned her head
like it weighed more than
a truck)
I'm a wolf in a sheep clothing.

He weighs her words.

FAWN
I may be a serial killer; this is
my way of disguise - I'm a sheep in
a wolf's clothing.

He twirled his glass of water without taking his eyes off her.

FAWN (CONT'D)
Your knees still intact?

MARY
You talk funny.

FAWN
It's called getting swept off your feet, you don't know what to say.

MARY
It's you who's loosing. One big loophole in your statement. A sheep in a wolf clothing is the worst kind, because see; whatever you say afterwards doesn't matter, after all you are still a sheep.

FAWN
Well, your name clearly isn't Rude, care to tell me?

MARY
(smiles)
Mary Sebina.

FAWN
Hey! My name's Joe. Interested in Jesus 2.0?

MARY
And that's supposed to be your surname?

FAWN
I've already told you my name, haven't I? Yep, Johnson's my last name.

MARY
Joe is only shot for Joseph.

FAWN
Says who?
(she's still like a corpse)
Wow, Mary will you go out with me?

MARY
We are begging now?

Then she dwarfed him with a laughter that entered his heart like bullets.

FAWN

How about this: I tell you a joke
and if you laugh, I take you out on
a date.

MARY

Did it work on the only girl you've
ever asked out?

FAWN

I'm trying to find out.

She debates saying no.

FAWN (CONT'D)

Come on.

MARY

Okay, let's give it a try.

She takes out a cigarette and lights it.

MARY (CONT'D)

You probably told that joke a
million times, so, let's make it
interesting.

FAWN

I'll make one on the spot then.

MARY

I know, because I'm giving you the
topic. Let's see, how about--

She thinks as she takes a drag, as if the cigarette feeds him
the choices to pick from. She lets out a cloud of smoke.

MARY (CONT'D)

Thieves. Make a joke about thieves.

FAWN

That is so random.

MARY

I know, now tickle me.

FAWN

Thieves, okay. Hmm...

Beat. He sparks with an idea.

FAWN (CONT'D)

Check this out: have you noticed that thieves have jerking off vibes?

MARY

That's dumb.

FAWN

No, seriously. How does a typical thief rob a place? He makes sure no one is around so that he can do his filthy deeds. Thereafter, he cums, I mean he leaves...

Mary chokes on the smoke.

FAWN (CONT'D)

Hey, I got you laughing already.

MARY

That's not a laugh. And it better not be your punchline.

FAWN

Okay. After the thief is done, he leaves and swears to never do it again - which he knows he doesn't really mean, because he will do it the very next time when he's thirsty.

He's desperate for Mary's laugh. No luck.

FAWN (CONT'D)

The joke looked funnier in my head. What I'm trying to say is, thieves masturbate at a pro-level...

Mary tries to hold back a laugh. Fawn notices and drags along for the laugh.

He mimics a guy masturbating.

FAWN (CONT'D)

(funny deep voice)

"I've been doing this for some time now, I think I need to go pro." Come on, thieves are world class. Come to think of it, Robin Hood must have been a legendary masturbator.

Mary can't take it anymore - she bursts into laughter.

FAWN (CONT'D)

Ding, Ding, Ding! Coffee date here we come. I'd kill for that joke.

MARY

Let's not get ahead of ourselves.

FAWN

You promised.

MARY

I never said when.

Fawn frowns.

MARY (CONT'D)

What is a sheep doing in places like this?

FAWN

(defensive)

I'm always in places like this.

MARY

You ordered water in a club, and you desperately want to take a stripper out on a date.

The word distorts his attention. As her words settle, he drinks his water with a distant mind.

MARY (CONT'D)

You're pretty funny, in an unusual way.

FAWN

Till now, I thought you were the evil Mary.

MARY

(cold gaze)

I am the Wicked Mary, be warned.

He realizes she's teasing, and he lightens up.

FAWN

How do I get hold of the wicked Mary?

MARY

What happened to a cup of coffee?

FAWN

I'm not sure coffee shops are still
open at this hour.

She shushes him with her finger, and leans in close to him,
as slow as a tortoise. With her lips an inch away from his--

MARY

(seductive)

There is something about homemade
coffee.

They lock eyes, understanding.

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

They rush in, undressing.

Fawn is left with underpants and socks. He turns to lock the
door. He then stares back at Mary who's on her bra and
panties, her coat is on the floor.

Fawn turns the light on, and hurries to kiss her. They share
their hushed kiss on the way.

FAWN

(catching breath)

Room's that way.

He stops and points at the rooms. Mary pulls him back again
by the shirt.

MARY

In my world, coffee's prepared in
the kitchen.

They continue their rushed excitement into the--

KITCHEN

In front of the fridge, Fawn kisses her cleavage through to
the stomach and all the way down.

Mary grabs his head and brings him back to lip kissing.

He lifts her up by her thighs and puts her on top of the
counter. He is now between her legs, and she pushes him into
the middle space.

She giggles and jumps on top of him.

FAWN

I never thought coffee could be so much fun.

MARY

(whispers)

It gets better.

She kisses his neck, continues on his abs, and slowly crosses over the border of the waist.

Back at Fawn's face he closes his eyes and lets out a deep breath of pleasure.

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE/ KITCHEN - LATER

Close up on the blinding kitchen bulb.

FAWN (V.O.)

When we turn off the light everything become consumed by darkness. The world's real state is darkness.

They are lying down on the kitchen floor looking up, shoulder to shoulder. Still partly dressed.

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

There is never really anything until light shines.

FAWN

You know what I think? God's greatest invention is the creation of light.

MARY

Nothing's ever invented, but discovered. God accidentally bore the universe's first ever light, and he discovered us.

FAWN (V.O.)

"God could have been anybody else. Like visiting the cavemen who never really saw the light - who lived their whole lives thinking they were blind - with a lighter in your pocket. When you light it before them, they will obviously kneel before you and kiss your feet."
Citation: Mary Sebina.

FAWN

How does someone with your name
possibly say that about God?

MARY

Believing in higher power never
really made sense to me, I guess.

Beat.

FAWN

What do you do, for a living?

MARY

We just did.

FAWN

Full time?

MARY

I warned you.

FAWN

You love you work?

MARY

I'm flattered you noticed I'm that
twisted.

(She replies with a blank
face)

But hey! A girl's got to eat. But
some guys really get obsessed with
me.

FAWN

Like that guy at the club?

MARY

Walter? Can't get him off my back
like a hunchback.

FAWN

What does he want?

MARY

Hey, what do you do?

Studying her bruise--

FAWN

He did this to you.

MARY

What do you do?

Fawn cooperates.

FAWN

I write. I'm a writer.

MARY

No way. You look like a grade school English teacher.

FAWN

Actually, three of my novels have been adapted for screen.

MARY

And that's supposed to turn me on? No, seriously, what do you do?

FAWN

Okay, ever heard of Autumn leaves?

MARY

(laughs)

That's an actual movie? One of your silver screen adaptations?

FAWN

Come on, where do you live, in a nut?

He stands upright and starts singing an eerie song for a while.

He then gives up feeding from Mary's unfamiliarity with the song.

MARY

I'm not going to remember a random movie just because you sing a random song.

FAWN

So, you do live in a nut.

He gives her a give up grin. He rests his head on the floor and looks up again.

MARY

Why are you like this?

FAWN

Like what?

MARY

Sweet little mama's boy.

FAWN
I'm a mean boy.

MARY
Say something mean to me.

FAWN
I don't want to.

MARY
Exactly.

FAWN
Because you'll be miserable.

MARY
That's the whole point of being
mean to somebody. You can't can
you?

FAWN
What is it that you said you do?

MARY
(playing along)
I'm a waitress at a club.

FAWN
Why is everyone a waitress and no
one's ever a stripper. The ratio is
actually the other way round.

MARY
You call that mean? You are the
type of guy that says sorry when
the lady moans.

FAWN
Wow! What's your tragic origin
story?

MARY
Let's not ruin your hard-earned
date by assessing the temperature
of my ice-cold blood.

The water on a gas stove in the kettle whistles. Mary stands
up to prepare the coffee.

MARY (CONT'D)
Just know that everyone is wicked,
they just need the edge. You start
living the day you jump off the
cliff...

FAWN
Spend the night.

They look into each other's eyes.

BO (V.O.)
What about your relationship? Was
it strictly business?

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM - DAY

Establishing the scene of the untidy living room.

TOM (V.O.)
You can say he was the first client
I've ever been so close to. Mostly
because I was guaranteed a load
chunk of money.
(he chuckles)

Fawn and Mary are lazed on the mat on the floor, with their
legs resting on the couch. They are watching TV upside down -
the TV is upright. Mary's bruise is still visible, only that
it's defined now, without make up.

Knock knock! Someone's at the door. They stare at each other
and they both scream.

FAWN/ MARY
COME IN!

They both laugh as Tom enters.

He takes in their strange arrangement.

FAWN (CONT'D)
Hah, my favorite editor.

TOM
I'm your only editor.

Mary laughs at Fawn. Tom also laughs at his own joke.

FAWN
(to Mary)
We are going to need your delicious
coffee.
(to Tom)
She makes very good coffee that I
suspect she's the coffee herself.

The couple sits upright, and Mary stands.

MARY
Tea or coffee?

FAWN
Coffee Mary, coffee.

MARY
I wasn't talking to you.

TOM
Oh, I would love some coffee too.

Mary left, and Tom shot Fawn with a silent "what the hell?" before he sat down.

FAWN
Trust me, you do not want to pick her brain. She's smarter, more than your wife maybe.

TOM
I meant the bruise. But hey, my wife's a doctor, you can't top that.

FAWN
Yeah, and she has a bad handwriting.

TOM
Ha! Okay.

A screeching sound bleeds from the car chase of the cartoons on the TV. Fawn doesn't reduce the volume.

FAWN
So, what's up?

TOM
I haven't heard from you since last week. Have you written something already?

FAWN
I decided to write a romance.

TOM
You figure? That's how you want to say bye to the game?

FAWN
How about a tragic love story?

TOM
 Are you serious, romance? What
 about the fans?

Fawn winks at Mary in the kitchen: he's not paying attention.

TOM (CONT'D)
 Will you at least take some time to
 think about it.

Fawn isn't taking the matter seriously. Tom frowns and
 prepares to leave.

TOM (CONT'D)
 Well, kiss your lady goodbye for
 me.

He leaves and shuts the door.

Mary walks in holding two mugs.

MARY
 Is he not in the mood for a
 delicious cup of coffee?

FAWN
 Are you going to be undressed like
 this in the presence of guests?

She gives him the other mug.

MARY
 My other outfit in this house is a
 coat. And how would I look like
 delivering coffee in an ankle-long
 coat?

FAWN
 Well, you better suit up into that
 coat because we're going shopping.

Off her excitement, he takes a toasting sip.

EXT. FAWN'S HOUSE - DAY

The house is located in the middle-class neighborhood,
 identical houses lined up the street.

He's standing on the lawn, waiting for Mary.

A white Toyota corolla pulls over at the gate. A middle-aged
 woman climbs off. She is wearing a royal blue blouse and a
 maroon leather jacket like they are formal clothes.

Her beauty climaxed with age, and she has a figure of a yogamom. We will know her as Jane.

Fawn starts off to meet her at the gate.

JANE
(infectious grin)
Hi neighbor.

FAWN
Hello.

JANE
I couldn't help but notice I had a new fine neighbor. If I haven't been cooked up by work all week, I would have come over to say hi.

FAWN
No worries, and hello again.

Jane produces a card from her pocket and gives it to him.

Fawn doesn't have enough time to look at it.

JANE
Here's my card, when you need anything just shoot. Well, not literally shoot because I will arrest you.

FAWN
Arrest?

She pulls out a gold badge with an imprinted police emblem on it, from her pocket. She flashes it to Fawn.

JANE
I made detective today. And this day just keeps on getting better...

She gives him a drunk look, day dreaming.

Then her eyes look beyond him.

JANE (CONT'D)
Or not!

Mary approaches them from the house.

JANE (CONT'D)
Is that your... I'm sorry, I didn't mean to--

FAWN

No, no, no. Don't sweat it, it's okay.

CUT TO.

INT. SHOPPING STORE - DAY

Fawn checks his shoulders in-between the clothes rows like a kindergartner stealing chocolate, and he takes out Jane's card and peaks at it. It reads, DETECTIVE T. JANE. He raises his eyebrow.

He walks across the shop to Mary, who's adoring herself in the mirror. She makes a 360 turn in a new perfectly fitting dress. She really is gorgeous.

Suddenly a man startles her from outside the glass window, waving. It is Walter, the argument guy from the club earlier.

Fawn notices.

FAWN (V.O.)

(vile)

Walter, Mary's hunchback. Mary, Walter's punching bag.

Fawn hurries outside to him, pissed. Mary tries to stop him.

MARY

He's a nut case, don't let him get to you.

FAWN

(passing by)

Stay inside.

He is possessed.

EXT. SAME - CONTINUOUS

He goes on to grab Walter by the collar, firm. He pulls him so close that he could smell the coffee he had for lunch.

FAWN

I know it's a small world, but we wouldn't want to meet you ever again.

WALTER

Strange, a week ago she couldn't afford a cup of coffee, but now, she can afford a bodyguard?

FAWN

No, but she affords a real man. Someone to love her, the one she deserves. Not the one who follows her around after beating her like a lunatic.

People start to circle around. Fawn puts his hands off Walter's wrinkled collars.

WALTER

That's what she told you? Listen man, that girl is bad news mate, she will destroy you.

FAWN

Says a man stalking her.

Walter steals a glance at Mary in the shop through the glass window.

WALTER

That girl is evil mate.

FAWN

(comes close to him again)
I hope you took a good glance because now we would appreciate it if you varnished. Get lost.

Mary's blurry face inside, looks at the scene as Walter fixes his collars and disappears into the crowd.

INT. SHOPPING STORE - CONTINUOUS

Fawn re-enters the shop and walks to the till.

Mary follows him.

TILL LADY (O.S.)

That will be three thousand, two hundred and thirty.

Fawn and Mary are now behind the till paying. He gives the lady his black card.

Mary hugs and rests her head on Fawn's back.

The till lady runs the payment, and it beeps, beeps.

TRANSFORM TO.

Beep sound, constant.

EXT. CLUB - DAY

The beep continues. It's coming from a garbage truck obstructing BO's view of the club building.

He is in his white Toyota Hilux across the tarred road. He gets off and walks into the club.

INT. CLUB - DAY

The same club Mary worked at. It is a slow business day. BO is seated at the bar with Douglas.

Douglas has obese red lips that he licks every time he smiles, and he has a goatee that he probably despises every time he looks in the mirror. He is seated by the stool a few feet away from BO, and his elbow is rooted on the varnished wood counter.

BO

I understand she was closest to you than any of the employees here.

DOUGLAS

Mary was my bestie, since way back. We went to junior and senior high school together.

BO

Was? What about now?

DOUGLAS

Our relationship took a little strain since he moved in with her boyfriend.

BO

What can you say about him?

DOUGLAS

Except that he's cute? Not much really, I just scratch my head over trying to figure out how he managed to keep Mary on leash.

BO

What do you mean?

DOUGLAS

Mary dated many men, though some resorted to abusing her, she could really stand her ground. What I admired about her is she knew how to get her man; she passed being manipulative at junior high. She was the girl every guy drool for, but no one wants, which is why I don't get why all of a sudden, the settling down circus.

BO

You don't think it's possible the guy forced her?

DOUGLAS

(smirks)

Have you met Mary? Trust me, getting beat up was her therapy.

BO pages his little notepad.

BO

Let's talk about Walter Kooitse.

DOUGLAS

Shame, he used to come here. Mary never told me why he was always after her.

BO

Can you describe their relationship?

DOUGLAS

Abusive, as the rest of hers. Nothing extraordinary.

BO

Did she ever report him, or any of her past boyfriends?

DOUGLAS

For what? Mary is the girl that your mother warns you about.

BO

When did Walter stop coming around?

DOUGLAS

Since the new sheriff came in town.

Douglas then grimaces as if Fawn heard the compliment telepathically.

EXT. POLICE DEPARTMENT/ PARKING LOT - DAY

BO's Toyota parks at an open spot.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY

The place is painted with police uniform. Many semi-office stalls insight. Officers are chatting, some sharing jokes between them, a typical police station.

BO makes his way through, and he's greeted by reverence stares. He marches on without notice, or care, he is used to this.

He stops at Bonnie, the receptionist by the register's table.

BO

Captain in yet?

(Bonnie nods no)

What do you have for me?

BONNIE

The panel beater agreed to meet, tomorrow.

BO

Okay.

BONNIE

Working on something already?

BO

Just damage control. That all?

BONNIE

Believe so, unless you want coffee.

BO

Yes please, strong and black.

BONNIE

Coming right up.

BO walks to his office, with an etching of "DETECTIVE" on it.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT/ BO'S OFFICE - DAY

His office is well kept, and neat. It has a spare table that has all of its files bulked up in a box. It has Jane's framed portrait photo.

BO spies through his curtain checking if someone's coming. He closes it and goes over at the shelf behind Jane's desk. He inserts his hand behind it pulling something out; a black journal. It is labeled with Jane's name.

He takes a seat at his chair. He has a dilemma: invade Jane's privacy or return the journal.

He opens it at last and schemes through it. His attention is grabbed by a drawn flower, blossoming. He tries to make sense of the drawing for some seconds and goes on scheming through the pages.

He stops again at one page. In bold, it's written "STRAIGHTEN UP THE PANEL BEATER"

Bonnie knocks at the door, and BO hurriedly puts the journal in his drawers.

BO

Come in.

BONNIE

Strong and black, just like me.

BO

I don't need to worry when Lloyd and Tepo finish the sugar in the jar. I would still have my coffee.

Bonnie gives BO his coffee.

BONNIE

Get out of here. What are you reading?

He pats Fawn's manuscript on top of the table.

BO

Stuff.

BONNIE

Okay.

She leaves.

BO follows her with his eyes as she does, while paging the manuscript. He starts reading.

Close up on the words: Jane has the worst taste in music.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. JANE'S HOUSE - DAY

Jane is washing her car with a hoarse pipe. There is a loud, slow country folk music playing from her car.

FAWN (V.O.)
I bet she was the kind of girl
every one of her friends from high
school had the coarse memory of her
as having a bad taste in music.

She is wearing biker shorts, and a saggy white football t-shirt.

EXT. FAWN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Fawn is stalling by the door, holding the knob, so that he speaks to Mary who's in the house.

FAWN
I'm leaving!

MARY (O.S.)
Don't forget my pills.

FAWN
Okay.

He shuts the door and walks towards his SUV which is parked beside the picket fence beside Jane's Corolla.

EXT. JANE'S/ FAWN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jane sees Fawn.

JANE
(inaudible)
Hello.

She realizes the volume is too loud. She accidentally wets her shirt with the water from the pipe as she turns it off. The water soaks her shirt and her skin on the breasts is visible like a see-through dress.

She swears to herself and bends over, turning off the music, letting the opened door frame her big butt that is protruding out like a balloon on the verge of bursting.

She walks towards Fawn at the fence.

JANE (CONT'D)

Oh, hello. I didn't quite catch your name that day.

FAWN

My name's Fawn.

JANE

You look like a Fawn.

FAWN

Your name on the card said...

JANE

That means you only know my surname. If I tell you my name now, I will stop being interesting to you.

FAWN

Wow!

JANE

Now go before you get used to my face.

She turns and walks back to her car to complete her chore.

Fawn looks at her shirt that's folded many times at her waist, squirting out her butt. She bends over again at her car and the music is back on.

EXT. CITY HIGHWAY - DAY

Close in on the traffic until Fawn's SUV comes into frame. The traffic and infrastructure reflection passes by Fawn's windows.

He stops by the gas station.

INT. BATHROOM/ GAS STATION - DAY

A ray of sunlight from the high windows strikes one bathroom door, underneath there are someone's feet.

The door opens and the sun ray strikes Fawn's face, who hides his eyes with his palm.

He washes his face at the zinc and looks at the mirror. His eyes lose the energy and they become blank. He walks back a few steps to see clearly.

It is a large graffiti quote in cursive: OUR FOREFATHERS THAT BELIEVED IN ANCESTORS AND DIED BEFORE THE MISSIONARIES CAME; DID THEY SIN?

Fawn has blocked our view from the words "BELIEVED IN ANCESTORS AND"

A toilet flushes behind Fawn and a man comes off. He walks to the zinc beside the one Fawn is using.

STRANGE MAN

You hate that he's right.

The man then walks off.

Fawn follows. He swings the door, and it charges up to shut.

INT. FAWN'S SUV - NIGHT

The SUV door shuts. Fawn gets into the house in the dark.

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Fawn opens the front door from outside. He switches the light on, in the living room.

FAWN

Mary!

KITCHEN

He switches the light on. There is a pile of dirty dishes in the zinc, she did nothing all day. He pours himself water to drink.

He proceeds into the--

HALLWAY

And into the--

ROOM

FAWN (CONT'D)

I'm home.

Mary is asleep on the bed. She's naked but facing the other way, and she's on top of the gown that must've got loose on her sleep.

Fawn covers her nude body with the gown. He wakes her.

FAWN (CONT'D)
(whispers)
Hey, sleepy head.

MARY
(sleepy)
Fawn?

FAWN
How's the headache?

She tries to respond but her guts play tricks on her. She storms off to the room's bathroom.

Fawn follows her slowly, with worry.

BATHROOM

Mary throws up in the toilet.

Fawn watches on, behind, in slow movement.

Mary stands up and turns to him with delayed eye contact. The loose gown reveals part of her frontal.

Puke still lingers around her lips. She fails to remove the stain with the gown sleeve.

FAWN (CONT'D)
(slowly approaching)
What's wrong?

She looks at him and touches her bare stomach.

Fawn reacts. Shock transitions into excitement. He rushes to her and tries kissing her.

Mary tries to duck the kiss and they both fall on the floor.

MARY
I just threw up, come on.

He continues anyway. He proceeds to her bare breasts and stops at her tummy. He listens inside the tummy.

They stay like that for some time.

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE/ KITCHEN - MORNING

Establishing a spotless kitchen.

FAWN (V.O.)
A queen doesn't wash dishes,

Fawn is washing dishes, daydreaming.

FAWN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
A queen deserves breakfast in bed.

Close up on the already prepared breakfast on the tray; eggs, bread, sausage and coffee.

A thud of a body hits the floor, offscreen.

MARY (O.S.)
(screams)
Fawn!

Fawn storms off.

FAWN
(runs in the hallway)
Where are you?

MARY (O.S.)
In the bathroom.

He runs there.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Fawn rushes in and slips on the water on the floor and his back hit the floor hard. His head jerks and hits on the hard surface of the floor tile.

FAWN'S POV: THE ROOM IS SPINNING, AND THE DOOR SHUTS BEHIND HIM. HE TURNS TO FIND THE THREE MARY'S APPROACHING, SLOWLY MERGING INTO ONE MARY.

She is holding a bowel in one hand and a tie on the other. She throws the bowel in the bathtub. Before Fawn can speak, she ties his hands with the tie. It has a knot that seems to have been conceived from a hundred of tries, specially made for this occasion.

FAWN
(dizzy)
What are you doing?

She ties the tie, tight to the metal handle of the bathtub.

FAWN (CONT'D)
Hey, what's going on?

She covers the whole of his face with a towel and clamps it at the back of his head. Water pours into the bathtub in high pressure, that he hears, he can't see anything. What is going on in her head? He wants to know.

MARY
Why did you come running?

FAWN
Is this some kind of sick joke?

FAWN'S VIEW: A SHADE OF MARY'S BODY THROUGH THE THREADS OF THE TOWEL. SHE GOES SILENT. THE ONLY SOUND HE HEARS IS OF THE WATER FILLING UP THE TUB IN HIGH PRESSURE. A SPLASH OF WATER COVERS THE TOWEL ON HIS FACE AND ALL OF THE AIR HE BREATHES GET SUCKED OUT OF HIM. HIS THROAT CLOSES, HUSTLING FOR AIR.

MARY (O.S.)
Don't make me ask again.

FAWN'S VIEW: THE COMPLETE DARKNESS FADES INTO THE OUTLINE OF MARY'S BODY AGAIN.

He coughs blanks, the air comes at him slowly.

FAWN
Is this you jumping off the cliff?
Sexy.

MARY
(scoffs)
Okay. A long day it is.

She pours the water on his face again taking her time, the water enveloping him and covering all the tiny pours on the towel masking him. More this time and the hustling for air becomes worse.

She waits for his coughs and chokes to die down, then again, makes it clear she is asking for the last time.

MARY (CONT'D)
Why did you come running?

FAWN
I thought you hurt yourself.

Mary pours the water again, and his lungs work an extra shift.

FAWN (CONT'D)
 Okay, and the baby. I thought you
 hurt the baby.

She pours and his soul is slowly trying to evaporate.

FAWN (CONT'D)
 Jesus. What do you want me to say?

From the tip of her lungs, she screams at his ears.

MARY
 What do *I* want you to say?

She wet him again.

MARY (CONT'D)
 I want you to respond to me
 honestly.

FAWN
 (recovering from the
 coughs)
 I don't know what this is but what
 I do know is that I love you, from
 the bottom of my heart.

MARY
 I can do this all week until I'm
 satisfied, don't say it because you
 want to get off the leash.

FAWN
 Why would I lie to you?

MARY
 My mother found me when I was
 sixteen, thirteen years after she
 ran out of interest in partying.
 She claimed she was remorseful...
 Are you listening?

No answer.

She splashes another bowel-full on his face. He coughs.

FAWN
 I'm listening, Jesus Christ.

MARY
 Said she loved me; told me she
 could only imagine what I had been
 through all my life - motherless.
 (MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

What I'm saying is no one really means it and I learned that the hard way when I found out that she told me that because she was dying of lung cancer. She just loved me out of guilt. Now, am here thinking.

"What is the difference between you and that Ho?" How do I know you love me because you genuinely love me?

She continued to peak her voice.

MARY (CONT'D)

You need to convince the inconvincible Fawn; do you love me?

FAWN

I do love you.

MARY

Not because you've considered the fact that your life depends on it.

FAWN

No... no.

MARY

Save yourself the lifetime of trouble, make a choice now. Are we raising this baby, OR should I start reviewing some options?

FAWN

Mary, I love you and we are raising our baby. Together.

A short pause. Mary pours the last bowel at him, and he struggles to breathe. She unties him.

FAWN'S VIEW: THE TOWEL IS REMOVED FROM HIS FACE AND THE VIEW LIGHTENS FROM DARK. MARY'S BLURRY SILHOUETTE AT THE TOILET SEAT BECOMES CLEARER AND CLEARER AS HE WIPES OFF THE WATER FROM HIS FACE.

Fawn rests his back against the wall of the bathtub and he finds Mary seated - one leg over the other - on the closed toilet seat. A line of sunlight from the window dissects her face, leaving the positive section sparkling gold and the rest of her face in the dark shadow.

From the side of her waist on the pink gown she is wearing, she slips out a lighter and lights the cigarette in her mouth.

She takes a long drag.

MARY
Welcome back.

She says as she lets out a large cloud of smoke. The smoke clears out to reveal her smirk.

MARY (CONT'D)
Don't worry, it's my one last drag.

FAWN
That was scary.

MARY
A girl's got to be sure of her man.

They exchange blank stares for a quick succession.

FAWN
Did you forgive her?

Mary asks with her eyes.

FAWN (CONT'D)
Your mother, did you forgive her?

MARY
No, I visit her every time to piss on her grave when I'm under threat of forgetting her.

Mary reads the disbelief in his eyes.

MARY (CONT'D)
Oh, please. You'll understand when you reach the edge.

FAWN
Didn't I just reach the edge?

She takes a drag and looks at him.

MARY
Not even close.

FAWN
What is this edge you keep talking about?

Mary dangles the loose foot of the top leg.

MARY

There's this question that quarrels with everyone's religious part, the one that could get kids suspended from Sunday school to get them an appointment with an exorcist.

She leans in and cups her chin with a hand holding a cigarette, pointing it away from her face.

MARY (CONT'D)

What if Jesus was a magician, some kind of performer, way ahead of his time by centuries, and he performed tricks that were so believable that he got himself a gigantic cult following?

(beat)

A slow close up on Mary as she speaks the following dialogue:

MARY (CONT'D)

Do you want to die looking back in regret, wondering where you would have been if you just lived a little? You are like everyone else around here that is why you blend in just fine. Everyone has the innate feeling that God is watching, and they should please him, to hell with their real feelings, they think. People need to realize that nothing's ever achieved through the power of faith or prayer, but by getting your hands dirty. Screw the superstitions and beliefs, it depends on you, and only you, to keep living. You start living the day you learn what you are capable of...

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT/ BO'S OFFICE - DAY

BO is talking with Tom over the phone. He rested his bare feet on top of the table, playing with the cover of Jane's journal.

BO

What kind of man trusts a woman who tried to drown him in his own bathroom?

TOM

Should I say it again? Some of the things were exaggerated.

BO

For the man we're dealing with, it's hard to believe so.

TOM

Drama is what makes the book a page turner.

BO

I'm fresh off a call with the Hamlin and Co. His former publisher, before he became self-published.

Tom doesn't answer.

BO (CONT'D)

His reference is colorful. He was once accused of pestering fans as a means of milking them for inspiration. Maybe, just maybe, Fawn isn't what you think he is... Are you there?

TOM

The problem with cops is that they are not open minded. They bend the narrative to what they thought of in the first place, until they start believing it themselves.

BO

What I don't understand is if you are writing such speculative fiction, why chop off the colorful parts of your life? To make yourself sound like the victim, that's what it is.

TOM

What did Sarah Caywood say?

BO

I can't disclose that.

TOM

What can I possibly do with the information?

BO

You tell me.

TOM

I honestly think there isn't as much as you reckon in this case. Fawn is innocent don't be blinded by an obsession.

BO

Obsession?

TOM

When I was four, I used to admire the stars at night with my grand pa.

BO looks at the photo on the wall, of him as a young cop and his father as a high rank officer.

TOM (CONT'D)

I would nag him about their nature, and he would tell me it's because God made these pores for our ventilation. I would then tell my mother and she would yell "grand pa lied" I would come to him again at sundown and he would come up with another story... he never ran out of them. "Tommy, if the stars turn off, we will get consumed by darkness." And mom was never impressed by the old-man's wittiness. One day, she put me on her lap and said, "son, the reason there are stars is that many, many suns have died. From then on, I hated the view because it now felt like enjoying the graveside of the dead suns.

BO

What are you saying?

TOM

I should have shut my four-year old ass up. I should have been grateful to grand pa's first tale.

(MORE)

TOM (CONT'D)

I should have let things as they were, while it was still good, because some things aren't meant to be found out.

BO

It's what I'm paid for.

TOM

I really can't talk right now. Can I come over at the station tomorrow?

BO

No. Don't come over. I'm meeting someone your side tomorrow. Still fine?

TOM

Still fine with me.

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

INSERT TV: A GUY CHARACTER IN THE TV WATCHES A WOMAN CHARACTER WALKING OFF AT THE BEACH. THE WOMAN CHARACTER WALKS AWAY WITH FLOODING TEARS AND SHE'S TRYING HARD NOT TO LOOK BACK. THE SCENE IS ACCOMPANIED BY AN EERIE SCORE.

Mary is resting on the couch under a blanket. Her eyes are fixed to the TV, and she is buried in weed smoke, originating from the joint in the ash tray.

Fawn enters holding a long shinny pole. He struggles to put it upright in front of Mary.

FAWN

What are you watching?

He recognizes the familiar eerie song and starts humming it.

MARY

You really wrote that?

FAWN

(chuckles)

On my worst day, yes. Are you smoking again?

MARY

(ignores the question)

What are you holding?

FAWN

So, I was thinking earlier. Now that Junior is on the way, we have limited time to have our PG 18 stuff.

MARY

Is it a stripper pole?

FAWN

I've never seen you in action.

She meets his gaze with a raised eyebrow.

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The furniture is pushed back to create space, and the pole is in the middle of the room like a lone man. The room is dimly lit, and seductive music plays in the home theater sound system.

Fawn is on the couch at the other end, being aroused by Mary who is just wearing bra and panties.

She's dancing at the pole, the stripper dance. She is hugging the pole passionately, contorting her body around the pole as if she has no bones.

Fawn smiles.

MARY

Impressed already?

FAWN

You're good at this.

MARY

You are great with a pen. How come I've never heard of you before? I mean, where is the paparazzi?

FAWN

People will praise Brad Pitt for the line I wrote in a book. People will worship Michael Jackson's wallpaper for the ghostwritten song that gave them nostalgia. The writing is extraordinary, the writer isn't. Ever.

She presses her breasts together under the bra, giving him a vogue face. She takes it off and throws it over to Fawn at the sofa.

Mary comes closer to give him a lap dance.

Fawn's head is level with Mary's navel. He looks up at her.

FAWN (CONT'D)
How many weeks?

Mary shushes him. She takes off the panties and sits on him.

Face to face with her--

FAWN (CONT'D)
How many weeks?

Mary goes for his fly.

FAWN (CONT'D)
Mary?

MARY
(whispers)
I don't know, do you want me to ask
my doctor?

Fawn doesn't reply. He looks coldly at Mary who doesn't notice, going up and down on him. She moans softly.

FAWN (V.O.)
She did not know. I could work with
an "I forgot", but "I don't know?"
And she just thought of that now,
that she had to ask the doctor? She
even called the doctor her doctor.

Mary is still on her separate world; she doesn't notice Fawn's stoic face.

Close in on Fawn's face as he thinks.

FAWN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I tried to make the strange
appointment she had with her
doctor. Picturing this doctor with
a beer belly saying to Mary that he
ran some tests. "And Ms. Sebina,
you have been feeling funny because
you are pregnant. I don't know how
many weeks because it is impossible
to tell you that, but you're
pregnant." And wasn't there some
kind of proof on her medical card
to confirm from?

Fawn is staring into still air.

FAWN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Her hot breaths fresh from her
 moans in my ear and neck entered me
 like an insult - I wanted to stop
 her bouncing on me and settle the
 elephant in the room, how many
 weeks Mary?

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE/ BATHROOM - MORNING

Fawn is looking at the mirror. He's lost in thought. Face is wet, he's been washing his face.

Mary's reflection comes into view and Fawn sobers up and studies it. She comes close, unsuspecting. Her hair is messy, she just woke up.

MARY
 (yawns at him)
 Morning Joseph.

FAWN
 Rise and shine.

MARY
 I'm craving a whole elephant for
 breakfast.

She squirts a toothpaste on her toothbrush and starts brushing her teeth.

MARY (CONT'D)
 I'm going to eat two days' worth of
 breakfast.

FAWN (V.O.)
 Apparently, hormones come as fast
 as a lightning bolt. These traits
 could mean Mary had pregnancy
 hormones. These traits could mean
 Mary was faking it.

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE/ OFFICE - DAY

Fawn is staring at the door, still deep in thought. He placed a scribbler in front of him.

Mary appears at the door holding a remote.

MARY
 You blatant liar. Shutter Island
 isn't a romance.

FAWN
I never said that.

MARY
Yes, you did.

FAWN
Don't think so.

MARY
You said Leo DiCaprio stared in a
romance called Shutter Island. You
hacked me into watching it.

FAWN
Shutter Island? Great romance, you
should watch it.

MARY
(rolls eyes)
No, it isn't. And didn't you just
ignore that?

FAWN
Deny what?

MARY
Calling it a romance.

FAWN
I never denied anything, you just
walked in the room.

He scribbled words in his scribbler, not paying attention to
her as if she evaporated.

MARY
I'm in no mood for games Fawn, can
you recommend me a movie?

FAWN
I'm sorry, I didn't hear you knock.
What's up?

MARY
(leans in)
Are you okay?

FAWN
Are you okay? You're acting weird.

MARY
Fawn, can you recommend me a movie?

Fawn shrugs in the chair and smirks.

FAWN
Shutter Island.

MARY
I hate you.

She frowns and disappears into the hallway.

Fawn's grin transitions into a blank, and he zeros-in into the words on the scribbler which in perfectly crafted cursive it reads, "WHAT IS REAL?"

INT. TATTOO SHOP - DUSK

A shady tattoo shop packed with crooked adolescents, biker men, and tattoo artists.

BO is talking to one of the tattoo artists by the till. as BO talks, the artist studies the drawing in Jane's diary trying to make sense of it.

BO
I never understood art, or simple,
art never understood the real
world. I always had the belief that
art was depressing. They'd tell you
it moves people and makes them
escape their problems. Staring into
the Mona Lisa makes you wonder,
witnessing the sixth chapel makes
you become lost in the abyss,
busking into the perfect sunset
makes you forget about your
problems. Well, what happens when
that sun finally sets, what happens
when you leave the gallery and
forget about the paintings in
there. That bell that's ringing
says there's someone at the door:
realization.

The artist tries replicating it as a sketch.

BO (CONT'D)
Realization that you're still
behind in paying bills, you're
still a miserable phony that
succumbed to midlife crisis. Trying
to drown all your sorrows with a
bottle of bourbon will only make
them float.

(MORE)

BO (CONT'D)

Plus, the owner never drew, that would explain the mediocre drawing.

TATTOO ARTIST

Flower or seed, or maybe she was drawing an emerging flower.

BO

But to symbolize what?

TATTOO ARTIST

A booming relationship, or a love tie.

BO considers this.

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mary is sleeping on Fawn's chest at the couch.

Fawn waves his hand on her face to check if she's asleep. He leaves her on the couch and studies her face for a while.

He sneaks out the door.

EXT. FAWN'S/ JANE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Fawn rounds the house into the building dark, to the backyard gate, and walks out. In the dark outside his yard, he dials Tom and calls.

BACK OF JANE'S HOUSE

Jane surveys around her house with a flashlight.

FAWN (O.S.)

Hey Tom.

BACK AT FAWN

Talking to Tom over the phone.

TOM

Man, I've read the first draft and damn man, we are totally winning this.

FAWN

Can I ask you something?

TOM
What is it?

FAWN
Is your wife still a doctor?

TOM
No, she morphed into a patient.
What kind of question is that?

FAWN
Whatever. I need her to do
something for me.

BACK OF JANE'S HOUSE

Jane is freaked by Fawn's silhouette. He is whispering to his phone in the dark.

She whitens Fawn's view with the flashlight.

JANE
Stranger.

FAWN
(blinded by light)
Neighbor.

JANE
You have a good reason why I
shouldn't go and grab my cuffs?

He produces the weed joint in his back pocket and holds it up high for her to see.

FAWN
How high can you get?

JANE
Now I don't have to arrest you for
trespassing, but for attempting to
blow your brains out with a law
officer.

FAWN
Just lend me the lighter so I can
smoke my alleged weed joint before
backup arrives.

JANE
Who said I needed backup?

FAWN

Surely you can't drag me all the way to your room without any help.

JANE

I won't have to. You won't resist.
(she pauses)
Wait, room?

FAWN

Where do you keep your cuffs?

JANE

Where I keep the lighter.

FAWN

Who wants to get arrested?

JANE

Who doesn't want to? By me?

He wants to reply, but then, she pulls her foot from her slippers, and scratches the top of her other foot with it.

INT. JANE'S HOUSE/ BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jane's bed side table is studded with lotions and perfume bottles, with their labels facing to the wall, hidden, as if she is ashamed of what she's using on herself.

Her white curtain at the opened window envelopes Fawn - shirtless - with a feathery touch. He's smoking his joint.

FAWN

Why do you repulse weed, do they test your blood at the police station for drugs?

JANE

No, I have anaphylaxis actually.

FAWN

What's that?

JANE

It's a severe allergic--

FAWN

Why didn't you just say you have an allergy?

JANE

It sounds more interesting when I say anaphylaxis. You became curious, didn't you?

FAWN (V.O.)

I bet Jane picked eggs randomly every morning, not following their row, just to create tension among the eggs - "who's next for breakfast?"

FAWN

But, I mean, how? Weed is the friendliest drug.

JANE

If you have the time, I'm happy to narrate to you how it once got me in a hospital bed for two weeks.

FAWN

Actually, Jane, I should get going. Mary might be worrying.

JANE

You're saying it wrong.

FAWN

What should I say, my girlfriend?

JANE

I meant my name; you said it wrong. It's not an English name. It is pronounced Jar, then the first vowel sound of the word, nest. It's: JAR-NE.

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The room is dark.

MARY (O.S.)

What were you doing over there?

She lights the room and Fawn finds her at the far end of the room where the hallway starts.

FAWN

I needed a lighter.

MARY

Okay. I was born yesterday.

FAWN
You don't want the truth.

MARY
Try me.

Beat.

MARY (CONT'D)
Goddammit Fawn.

He moves towards her.

FAWN
I went over Jane's, JANE'S, so she
could help me with something.

MARY
What?

FAWN
A ring...

MARY
Are you proposing?

FAWN
Well, not now, but in a month's
time.

MARY
Of course he's proposing.

FAWN
I would probably understand if you
thought we are rushing things.

Please say we are.

MARY
No, we are not.

For the first time, emotions are getting the better of her.

FAWN
Then there is potentially bad news.

She freezes.

FAWN (CONT'D)
You will need to act surprised when
I go down on one knee.

He finally arrives at her.

MARY

And why is that bad news?

FAWN

It will be at the awards ceremony,
and you're a bad actor.

MARY

Actress, I'm a good actress.

FAWN

We'll find out at the awards.

He brushes his cheek against hers, and he baby-kisses her on the lips.

INT. PENTHOUSE/ WRITERS UNION - NIGHT

Fawn and Mary are in front of the audience in the packed venue.

She is beside him at the mic stand that keeps reminding Fawn of a church alter, and a wedding day. She finds comfort under his armpit like a spoiled puppy, with her smile as wide as Mary can.

On his and her hand, they hold wine in glasses prepared to make a toast.

FAWN

The only good thing about it is
that even if I don't bag the award,
I already had one of my best
moments. Well, the bad news is when
I do win, then I will have to
pretend the award means nothing to
me.

MARY

You better.

The audience laughs.

Mary admires the sparkling jewel in her hand for the millionth time.

FAWN

Don't let us steal much of your
precious time ladies and gentlemen,
may the show proceed.

They retire into the audience and the show proceeds. The host starts cracking up the people, anticipating them with nominees of the next award.

The couple walks in-between the seats walking to their seats, or a place to stand at and watch the ceremony.

MARY

Are you okay? You're not here with us.

FAWN

(turns to her)

That's because I'm struggling to figure out how come you become even more beautiful every time I blink.

Mary can't help herself not to smile, failing to reply.

FAWN (CONT'D)

I love you too is the answer you're looking for.

They walk again.

MARY

How was my acting? I was convincing, wasn't I?

FAWN

You're genuinely happy, that's not acting... you're still a terrible actor.

MARY

Actress.

Fawn scoffs - *yeah right*.

They spot Jane at the standing audience at the back, the one too early for the after party. She waves at them, and they begin towards her.

FAWN

How's her taste in diamonds?

MARY

(glances at her ring)

It's as if I chose it myself.

Fawn's phone ringtone interrupts his reply. It's Tom.

FAWN
 (to Mary)
 Have to take this, I will be with
 you two, shortly.

Mary nods and walks away as Fawn picks up.

FAWN (CONT'D)
 (to Tom over the phone)
 You're late Tommy. Did you manage?

TOM
 Did we win?

FAWN
 They haven't announced yet. Tommy,
 answers.

TOM
 You already got your knees dirty,
 didn't you? I don't get you; you
 don't trust her but yet you ask her
 to marry you.

FAWN
 Why did you call Tommy?

TOM
 I've been thinking. I think the
 DNA's not going to be possible, I
 can't believe we - two fully grown
 men - thought it was.

FAWN
 What do you mean?

TOM
 We'll check the weeks. And you owe
 me man, I had to convince my wife
 first. I'll get back to you
 shortly... Thank me in your speech.

He hangs up.

Fawn stares at his new fiancé with Jane, enjoying themselves.

FAWN (V.O.)
 I rest my eyes on Mary and her
 slowly expanding tummy with only
 one question lingering in my head:
 What are you hiding?

Walter appears clueless in the crowd looking for someone.

FAWN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Walter had the nerve!

He propels through the loose crowd making his way over to Mary and Jane.

Fawn trails him.

Mary notices.

MARY
(to Jane)
This can't be good.

JANE
Who's he?

Mary starts to them.

Walter - unaware he's being trailed - meets Mary before Fawn.

WALTER
You gained weight.

MARY
You should leave now!

Fawn seizes Walter's arm from behind, and looks at him dead on, face to face.

FAWN
I thought I made myself clear.

MARY
(whispers to them)
Walter you should get out of here
before it turns into a brawl.

They are disturbed by the host's announcement upfront.

THE HOST
Now the moment we've been waiting
for ladies and gentlemen. This
year's short novel of the year has
had a fair share of ambitious
works. Some of which are... "What
is real?" by Fawn...

His words fade out.

WALTER
Mary, I just want to talk to you.

FAWN
About what?

MARY
I have nothing to say to you
Walter.

FAWN
About what?

WALTER
Please Mary.

MARY
Go Walter.

FAWN (V.O.)
Again, I asked the two what Walter
wanted to talk about and they paid
no attention to me as if I was a
toddler demanding ice cream from
his arguing parents - *a third
wheel.*

WALTER
Perhaps this is a bad time, I'm
sorry.

Loud this time to Walter's back, who was leaving--

FAWN
Hey! About what?

Some people in the audience looks at him, and Tom calls
again.

He picks up.

TOM
Champ.

FAWN (V.O.)
Tommy said it like a father
comforting her daughter after she
missed a penalty and lost a Junior
High soccer championship.

FAWN
Speak to me.

TOM
It's nine weeks.

FAWN (V.O.)
 Nine weeks is bad, very bad.

TOM
 Is nine weeks good? Fawn? Fawn? Are
 you there? Fawn...

His call of his name echoes--

THE HOST
 Fawn, where are you?

Fawn walks to the stage to accept the award.

THE HOST (CONT'D)
 Oh, there he is, bear in mind that
 he had to pretend to his fiancé
 first.

The audience laughs.

Fawn is stoic and claims the award.

With a mic in front of him, he spots Mary in the audience.

FAWN
 Thomas Tau and I thank you all, for
 believing in the story.

That's it, the whole speech, the one worthy of the highlight
 reels.

He walks off. There is a delayed applause due to mummies
 among the crowd.

THE HOST
 Well played Fawn, she won't notice.

The audience finally laughs, and claps.

Mary is the only one in the audience who knows nothing is
 meant to be funny. She knows he is onto her.

As Fawn comes closer, she starts breathing heavily,
 frightened. She starts having an attack, or likely, she
 starts faking an attack.

She weeps, holding her stomach, falling to the floor - well
 played.

Commotion erupts and one guy shouts - leveling Mary's cries.

GUY
 Hurry, call an ambulance.

Fawn arrives at her.

FAWN
I'll take it from here.

He kneels down to Mary.

GUY
Are you sure?

FAWN
(cross)
Yes!
(gives the guy the trophy)
Give this to Jane, she's supposed
to be around here.

He lifts Mary up.

The circled crowd makes way for them. He drills through a shocked flood of people, headed to the elevator.

INT. SAME/ BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jane leaves.

INT. SAME/ ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

From the elevator, Fawn looks at the stone-still crowd.

Its door drags, making it clear it is going to close during the next summer Olympics.

When the door finally shuts, he drops Mary to the floor.

CUT TO:

INT. FAWN'S SUV - NIGHT

Mary is still crying.

The speedometer suggests they are moving at 110km per hour.

FAWN
Quit crying you lying bitch.

MARY
What's going on?

FAWN
Dry out those plastic tears.

MARY

What are you talking about?

FAWN

You lied to me.

MARY

I lied to you?

Speedometer: 136km per hour.

FAWN

What did Walter want to talk to you about?

MARY

Is this what this is about? Fawn, Walter is a madman.

Speedometer: 144km per hour.

FAWN

I know a lot you think I don't, so quit fooling around.

MARY

What it is you think I did? I don't know what you want me to say.

FAWN

How about you start telling me who's the father of that baby.

MARY

Fawn...

Speedometer: 169km per hour.

FAWN

Uh-uh. No lies Mary.

She snaps out of it, and sits upright, no longer crying. She wipes off the fake tears.

MARY

Fawn, you are not the father, there you have it. I never said you were.

Speedometer: 186km per hour.

FAWN

(pointing between them)
Whatever this is, it has been a hell of a run. It's over.

MARY

No, it isn't. You promised me and my child forever. You don't just break a promise.

FAWN

Promise? I never promised to a maniac's baby. It was my baby I made a promise to.

MARY

No, you assumed it was. That's not my fault.

Speedometer: 198km per hour.

FAWN

You are deluded.

MARY

LOOK OUT!

On his windscreen, a figure brushes over in an instant, if he had blinked, he would have missed it.

He hits the brakes, Mary hits the dashboard, and as the car abruptly hacks its halt, his hands grow their own brain, going berserk on the steering wheel and the car finally stops after a howling screech.

EXT. FAWN'S SUV/ MIDDLE OF NOWHERE - CONTINUOUS

It is so dark that the front car lights and the brake lights are the only source of light.

The car stopped sideways, drawing a cross with the tarred road's collaboration.

The forest chirps howls following no pattern at all, making us guess at every turn for a fresh one.

INT. SAME - CONTINUOUS

Still like corpses--

FAWN

What was that?

As he waited for her answer, he looks on the rear mirror and sees a dot of a dull full moon, far deep behind the tall trees.

The windscreen is wrinkled with cracks.

MARY

Fawn...

She is looking on her side beyond her window - she has a bruise.

Fawn tilts his head away from her obstructing head, to get a clear look.

He notices a silhouette of a pile, a body figure rather - a person. He gets out of the car.

EXT. SAME/ MIDDLE OF NOWHERE - CONTINUOUS

The body is six feet away from the car, he walks there.

A feet away, the body flinches. It's a man.

Mary gets off the car behind, and Fawn walks away from the body, dialing on his phone.

Mary reduces her speed at every step, realizing.

MARY

(gasps)

Walt?

Fawn is puzzled, with a ringing phone at his ear.

FAWN

What?

MARY

And what are you doing?

FAWN

Calling for help. Did you say
Walter?

What are the odds?

She paces towards Fawn and snatches the phone away; she then turns it off.

FAWN (CONT'D)

He needs an ambulance.

(she ignores)

Are you hearing me? I just ran
someone over.

MARY

And I killed a fly this morning.

FAWN

What?

MARY

It was just a fly Fawn.

She kneels to Walter.

He turns his head towards them, and it looks like minced meat, hard to spot the origin of his hieroglyphic words - he could be letting them out through his nose, that's how messed up his face is.

FAWN

What's he saying?

MARY

I don't know.

FAWN

Maybe it's high time we called an ambulance.

Fawn is helpless.

Mary stands up and comes to look him in the eyes.

MARY

Why?

FAWN

The man needs help Mary, he could die.

MARY

That's it, he could die. And then what? You spend the rest of your life in the same stinky orange two-piece.

WALTER (O.S.)

Please...

As Walter sobs from the friction in his lungs, Fawn looks down at him, his mind racing.

Mary slaps Fawn.

MARY

That's the face of the man who invaded your world.

FAWN

Jesus. I didn't intend to.

MARY

Who's gonna believe that?
Accidentally hitting a man you had
a duel with, two times in public,
and just found out that he's the
father to your unborn baby.

What a way to find out.

FAWN

We can't leave him, not like this.

MARY

We can't leave him? That's what I
hate about men, I never met one.

Fawn's jaw drops.

MARY (CONT'D)

We never even saw him on this
highway. And this is it Fawn, your
edge. Are you giving yourself up
because of a silly belief of doing
the right thing? Or are you taking
control of your life?

FAWN

This isn't one of your gothic
fantasies.

MARY

We don't have all night, we might
have company.

Fawn is trembling, struggling to reach a choice.

FAWN

He knows it was us.

MARY

Worry less about that. The question
is are we on the same page.

Long pause as Fawn arrives at a decision.

FAWN

(whispers)

Yes.

MARY
 (kneels to Walter)
 Are we on the same page Walt?

WALTER
 Please call an ambulance.

Mary stands and takes off Fawn's suit blazer, cursing to herself while doing it - *HE'S TALKING ABOUT AMBULANCES.*

She leans again to Walter, with the blazer in her hand.

MARY
 Last time Walter.

WALTER
 I need an...

His muffled words gets lost in the fabric of Fawn's blazer. Mary is choking Walter and he is suffocating. His legs shakes in cry for help.

Finally, he becomes still.

FAWN (V.O.)
 Just like that, Mary was transformed, and just like that, finally, Walter was gone.

INT. FAWN'S SUV/ SPEEDING - NIGHT

They are fleeing the scene.

FAWN (V.O.)
 On the way to the hospital, Mary told me she hoped I hid my blood-stained blazer in my car where the police can't find it because they really leave no stone unturned. When I stuffed it under the backseat, she was busy scrubbing Walter's blood in-between the windscreen glass cracks. She then said, "we never saw Walt after the ceremony, comprende?"

FAWN
 Yeah, we never saw Walter after the ceremony. We didn't kill him.

MARY
 (wide eyed)
 Walter is dead?

Fawn looks at her.

MARY (CONT'D)

That's what we know. We don't even know he's dead... Now, for the final phase. Are you ready?

They fasten their seat-belts and he steps on the car.

They rush past a "HOSPITAL AHEAD" sign.

EXT. HOSPITAL GATE - CONTINUOUS

Their car, with turned off lights, doesn't decrease the speed despite closing in on the gate. The speed climaxes and they crush on the gate hard.

Alarms go off and a quite number of people come to rescue, including the security guards. The car is wrecked, airbags visible from inside the car.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT

One nurse drives a patient on a wheel chair in the lonely hallway. A baby's cry sheds from one of the rooms.

Fawn is on the bench with a bandaged arm and he's accompanied by a standing police officer.

A doctor approaches the two. The doctor has a bruise on her left arm.

DOCTOR

Mr. Johnson?

FAWN

Doctor?

DOCTOR

The baby is safe and sound. And, she's fine actually, no point of keeping her. She just needs some rest. Would you like to see her?

FAWN

Yes.

They leave the police officer on the bench to go check on Mary.

INT. SAME/ ADMISSION WARD - CONTINUOUS

They find her on bed facing the other side, like a sulking teenager missing her boyfriend. The doctor scribbles something in her file.

Mary turns and looked at them. She haunts Fawn with her smile.

EXT. FAWN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Close up on a hand knocking on the front door. It is Jane, holding the award trophy.

Mary opens the door.

MARY

(voice crack)

Hey Jane. Thank you, you're a lifesaver... Please, come on in.

JANE

Are you okay? Is the baby alright?

MARY

(she explodes)

I can't Jane, I can't go on like this.

FAWN (O.S)

Neighbor.

He interrupts from behind Mary in the house.

FAWN (CONT'D)

(to Mary)

And why are you crying?

MARY

I'm not crying.

JANE

What's going on here? And why do you all look like you're fresh off the ring with Mike Tyson?

FAWN

We were involved in a car accident; we are fine really.

JANE

(studies Mary's bruise)

Is that the truth?

FAWN

Yes.

JANE

I was asking Mary.

Mary hesitates.

FAWN

Tell her goddammit.

JANE

Mary?

MARY

Yes, we were in an accident. We hit the hospital gate.

JANE

Where?

MARY

Athlone.

JANE

Okay, I guess it won't be a problem if I stop by at the hospital on my way to work, would it?

They all remain quiet. She hands Fawn the award.

JANE (CONT'D)

Anyways, congratulations. Okay, bye.

She peaks at Mary's face for the last time and left.

The door closes.

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

FAWN

What the hell was that about?

Just like that, Mary sobers up.

MARY

What do you mean?

FAWN

What game are you playing at?

She just giggles and walks away.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - LATE MORNING

The female doctor from the previous scene is at her table with Jane. She is scratching her right arm without looking at Jane. Her coat's sleeves are pulled back.

DOCTOR

Like I said detective, it is confidential, I cannot disclose that kind of information.

Jane stands.

JANE

I am so sorry to bother you doctor. It is just that I have the victim's best interest at heart. But anyway, thank you for your time.

She walks to the door. The doctor looks at her walk like she wants to say something. Jane grabs the knob.

DOCTOR

There was something strange about it though.

Jane turns.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Yes but you did not hear this from me.

The doctor pulls her coat sleeves to reveal her bruise on her left hand as she speaks.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

The bruises on his fiancé. Some seemed to have happened earlier.

JANE

What do you mean?

She continues scratching the skin on her right hand.

DOCTOR

What color is the blood detective?

JANE

Please be clear ma'am, don't discuss biology with me.

DOCTOR

Please bear with me.

JANE
Red, the blood is red.

DOCTOR
But what if it has been exposed for
some time?

JANE
It develops a darker shade.

The doctor presents both her hands to Jane.

DOCTOR
Notice something?

The bruise from yesterday is darker than the recent irritated
skin on the Doctor's right hand.

JANE
So you are saying some bruises on
her had a much darker hue? Did she
had two collisions?

DOCTOR
Not so possible because the older
ones wasn't much of a strong force,
human force maybe.

JANE
Or deliberate?

The doctor hesitates.

JANE (CONT'D)
Thank you.

She leaves.

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE/ OFFICE - DAY

He is writing at his table, partly concentrated.

Mary appears at the door hiding both hands behind her back.

MARY
Such a cute thing when you're
busy... Hey, heads up.

She shows him his blazer, the one from the accident. It's
clean.

FAWN

Yeah great, I need a replica of my suit so that I can be reminded.

MARY

Don't be silly, it's the same blazer, I washed it.

FAWN

Now I'm going to burn it.

MARY

It can't disappear at the same time with Walt, doesn't work like that.

FAWN

Tell me, why do you bother.

MARY

What?

FAWN

Why do you bother? . You can't possibly think we're still a thing, this is not love. I don't know what it is.

MARY

Alright, your mind's all over the place, I'll leave you alone.

FAWN

That's it, I want you to leave me alone. It's over.

MARY

No, it's not.

FAWN

You're nuts, I want you out of my house.

MARY

No.

FAWN

No sane person can put up with this, can you be a normal person just for once.

MARY

Normal? There is no 'How to live life 101' and you talking about normal.

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

If there's anyone that's putting up with anything here is me; I do what has to be done to make this work, I mean you sent me to collect the car at the panel beaters for Pete's sake, at least I'm not being a coward. Say it's not love? Well, it won't be like one of your fairytales, Autumn whatever, this is real life - not perfect but real, and it is as real as it's ever going to get get.

FAWN

You killed a man Mary.

MARY

Sure, and how many can say did that for you?

She leaves and shuts the door.

Before he blinks, she comes back again.

MARY (CONT'D)

I'll tell you your problem, you are so stuck up in this idea you created in your head that you are in this cushion were all the perks and flaws of the world can be avoided. Well, we aren't characters in your fiction book, there will always be setbacks as long as we breath and the aim should not be to prevent them because we can't - they come like lightning. The aim should be to control them. This isn't something you run away from, because it will haunt you, and you think finding someone new is the answer? Okay, if all this damage control I'm doing is too much for you then fine, I give up. But good luck proving you didn't kill Walt.

FAWN

You wouldn't dare.

MARY

Why? Because you will beat me to a pulp to drain away all my ideas of turning you in?

FAWN

I never raised my hand on you.

MARY

You beat me all the time Fawn. I mean you don't have no shame; you beat me on our first date, Tom and Jane saw the bruises. Who knows what I might have said or not to Jane when she helped me to choose the ring. You know what the funny thing is, I tried calling her in call for help when you ran Walt over.

FAWN

You called Jane?

MARY

Yeah, and you snatched it away and switched it off. What is a successful writer like you doing with a stripper like me? You are obsessed with me, that is why you killed for me, you control freak. You even coached me to what I had to tell Jane earlier. I was convincing, wasn't I? I don't think she's suspecting there is more to the story than just hitting the hospital gate.

FAWN

Oh, wow! Your story is tremendous, but I'll report the truth.

MARY

Your truth? Be my guest.

She leaves.

Fawn calculates Mary's words for a while, conflicted.

He finally takes out his phone, and begins typing a message.

TEXT MESSAGE: I'M THINKING OF WHERE MY FINGERS SHOULD RATHER BE, INSTEAD OF TYPING.

He sends the text to Jane.

INT. POLICE DEPT/ BO'S OFFICE - DAY

The room is different. There are two packed tables unlike earlier. It is a shared office.

Jane is at the other table, busy. Her phone beeps and she checks it.

She smiles as BO walks in.

He has No beard.

BO
(re: smile)
I need that kind of energy and
vibes later.

JANE
I shouldn't even be smiling I feel
bad.

BO
Forget the guilty smiles, you'll
have genuine ones later.

JANE
What do you mean?

BO
Don't tell me you forgot.

JANE
Don't make me feel like an
antagonist already, what did I do?

BO
Come on, The Hangover? Tonight? I
reminded you countless times, its
Friday today.

JANE
Oh yea! Snap, I'm sorry. Next time,
I promise.

She prepares to leave the office and--

BO
(disappointed)
Come on J, what am I supposed to do
with the ticket?

JANE
Take Captain Duiker with you, the
old man could use some humor.

She leaves and BO frowns.

INT. POLICE DEPT./ FRONT DESK - MOMENTS LATER

Jane talks to two officers behind the tall desk, Bonnie's desk.

JANE

Hey player, I need a file report on the car accident that happened last night.

LLOYD

The one where a victim lost his life?

COBB

(to Lloyd)

Of course that one, she's a detective.

JANE

No actually the one that happened at the Athlone hospital main gate.

COBB

I mean every case is serious, there might be some hidden foul play in the shadows.

The two officers stare dizzily at the attractive Jane - awkward.

JANE

Can I see the file please.

COBB

Lloyd go get the damn file.

Lloyd clumsily hurries towards a litter of stacked files behind, to search for it.

COBB (CONT'D)

(trying to be cool)

I go by Cobb now by the way, in case you forgot. Not like the maize cob or something like that. You know only guys like--

COBB (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Guys like Lloyd don't know my name is Cobb like DiCaprio's character in Inception. But it's too complicated they won't get it anyway.

Jane hides her boredom with a forced grin.

JANE

I'm sure they won't.

Lloyd returns with three files. He starts peaking in the files on the table top.

LLOYD

Let's see... this one happened at the park no serious injuries, not our guys... Moving on it's a hit and run,
 (takes out a picture and puts it back)
 deceased victim nope not our guy...

JANE

(re: the pic)

Can I see that, one more time?

Lloyd points "you mean this one?" She nods and he slides her the picture. Jane studies it.

It's Walter's corpse in the picture.

LLOYD

(looking at the last file)
 Bingo! We've found our sociopath, Shh, wait it's a couple.

JANE

(holding Walter's picture)
 What time did this accident happen?

LLOYD

According to the report he was found around 2:30 am, but his body froze, so the accident might have happened last night.

JANE

Can I borrow these files?

LLOYD

I don't know, I mean, it's someone else case.

JANE

I'll return it before you know it.

LLOYD

I am not sure.

COBB

Of course you can borrow the file we're one and the same because what you find might be of great use. Plus the case is assigned to Tepo, it shouldn't be a problem.

She takes the two files.

JANE

You are a lifesaver thank you.

COBB

Anything for you.

JANE

Okay bye.

The two officers drool over at her behind while she walks off.

COBB

God, she's into me.

LLOYD

No way, she is in to me.

COBB

She called me her lifesaver what do you say about that?

LLOYD

So you can save all that for me and watch me play with that ass. She called me player.

They are caught red handed as she looks back at them at the door. They pretend to be working on the files in embarrassment.

COBB

(whispers)

You think Tepo's going to be mad at me for giving her the file?

LLOYD
(whispers)
Who dares and gets mad at Jane?

INT. PANEL BEATER'S WORKSHOP - DUSK

A man's knees, the panel beater's, point out from bent legs under a jacked-up car, with the upper torso lost underneath the car - he's fixing the car. His name is Paul.

BO is standing beside a table with a greasy mess of tools and spanners.

BO
That's all the woman requested,
that's what you're saying?

PAUL
I believe so, yes.

BO
Did she pay you?

The Panel Beater slides out from under the car. He stands up and wipes the grease off his hands.

PAUL
Detective, I don't make enough
money changing the tires. The only
time I have a big paycheck is when
a car is fresh from a fatal
accident, but no one really wants
that, right?

BO
So, when the injuries of the driver
aren't consistent with the accident
you make extra money by threatening
to report?

The Panel Beater thinks, then laughs. He says this as he leaves into a kitchen stall--

PAUL
That's a genuine business idea,
I'll consider that... I drink
coffee around this time, want one
detective?

BO looks around, scanning the workshop.

BO
No, thanks.

PAUL
Suit yourself.

A kettle is set on, offscreen.

BO studies himself in a stained mirror, admiring his beard.

BO
So, Paul...

PAUL
Yes?

BO
This lady, she the only one who
came to you about this?

No answer. The kettle roars on. BO freezes.

BO (CONT'D)
Paul?

Behind his reflection in the mirror, he sees Paul's
reflection far deep outside. He's running away.

BO (CONT'D)
Shit.

He storms of.

EXT. WOODS - DUSK

BO, with a .38 Special revolver in hand, is chasing Paul in-
between the tall forest trees.

BO
Hey... freeze. Stop.

He trips on a lying log and rises up quickly. He shoots at
the skies, and it only increases Paul's speed. BO stops and
aims.

He fires the gun and shoots Paul in the back of the thigh.
Paul screams and falls down.

INT. PANEL BEATER'S WORKSHOP - LATER

They are face to face in their chairs at the tool table.
Paul's trouser is soaked in red.

BO
Are you sure you're not leaving
anything out?

PAUL
Yeah, I'm sure. She came here and
ordered what to say in times like
this.

BO stands up and walks towards him.

PAUL (CONT'D)
I swear man, that's all I know.

BO passes him and goes on to the shelves. He takes out a
first aid kit and walks back to Paul.

PAUL (CONT'D)
What are you doing.

He stomps it on top of the table.

BO
I'm taking my bullet; I don't want
to write a four-page statement on
why one of my bullets is missing.

INT. JANE'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jane walks across the room to relinquish the gun and the two
case files she came with, at the table. The room is dark.

JANE
I ignored your text.

FAWN (O.S.)
But you didn't want to.

Fawn appears at the sofa and lights the side lamp beside him
at the couch, and the room becomes lit by a lazy light.

JANE
You should stop sending me texts,
the time has come.

FAWN
Which page are we on?

JANE
The excitement's depleting, we
should stop seeing each other.

FAWN

Forget the message. That's not what I'm here for.

JANE

What are you here for?

FAWN

To convince you that things are not as they seem. You should know my side of story before the wheel spins.

JANE

Oh, the absolute truth, I know, it's the first time I've heard of this.

FAWN

A doubting Thomas I see, but let's find out if you'd still be thirty minutes later. Sit.

JANE

Thirty minutes later I'll be in your dining room enjoying your favorite dish and right about now I have twenty-nine minutes left to freshen up.

FAWN

Why are you coming over?

JANE

She invited me.

Fawn thinks for a while.

He gets up and limps to her at the table. They lock eyes for some seconds, and he attempts a kiss. She ducks his lips.

JANE (CONT'D)

We're done Fawn.

FAWN

But seriously, you really need to hear what I came here to say.

She doesn't flinch.

FAWN (CONT'D)

See you at the dinner table then.

He walks off.

INT. BAR - EVENING

A finger smudges an almost dried blood stain on a shirt sleeve. It's BO, having beer with Tom at the table.

Tom slides a beer to BO.

TOM
Some time off doesn't hurt.

BO
Not in my world.

TOM
Let's talk about something else.

BO
What exactly.

TOM
I don't know, have kids? Are you coming back to a warm meal, or to a froze plate?

BO
(shrugs)
I used to. I used to have someone.

TOM
What happened?

BO
She blatantly told me that what was worse than a mommy's boy was a daddy's boy.

TOM
Oh, come on.

BO
She probably wouldn't have said it if she met the man. There was nothing not to idolize about him... I knew from an early age that I wanted to be like him, being the criminal's worst nightmare.

TOM
Did you?

BO is puzzled, in need of an answer.

TOM (CONT'D)
Looks like you wanted to be him.

Tom's phone beeps and he takes it out to read the message.

TOM (CONT'D)
 It's my wife, I either eat the food
 warm or hope it'll be warm in the
 street corner I spend the night at.

He stands up.

TOM (CONT'D)
 I'll ring you up tomorrow before
 Sabrana.

He takes Bo's silence as a yes and goodbye. He leaves him at the table.

BO takes out a bullet, the one he shot Paul with. He fiddles with it. His phone rings and he answer.

It's Captain Duiker over the phone.

BO
 Captain?

CAPTAIN DUIKER
 (serious)
 See me tomorrow in my office, first
 thing in the morning.

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE/ DINING ROOM - NIGHT

All the three at the table, Jane's wearing the different outfit. She and Fawn share a glance while Mary is saying grace.

MARY
 (praying)
 God bless this food we are about to
 eat and continue to bless us with
 more happy days, amen.

ALL
 Amen.

They feast.

JANE
 This is delicious.

MARY
 Thank you, it's one of Fawn's
 favorites.

JANE
Is it?

FAWN
Guilty.

JANE
Well, I don't blame you. I love it too.

MARY
Yeah, he thought you would. He asked me to invite you over.

FAWN
Did I?

MARY
I had no idea it was a secret. Was it?

War of the glances.

Jane for the rescue--

JANE
Is that powdered milk I taste in the pasta?

MARY
Did I ruin it for you?

JANE
No, it's good. You could get away with it for days.

MARY
Just for days? Why not forever?

JANE
Nobody gets away with something forever. It's like secrets, they have a way of somehow sneaking into the ears they shouldn't.

MARY
Is that right?

JANE
See; Fawn enjoys it with powdered milk. Sure, I let it slide this first time, what about next time?

MARY

I thought you liked it.

JANE

No, really, it's good. It's just strange.

MARY

Define strange.

JANE

What? I don't know. I mean strange-strange. The same way Fawn forgot he's the one who invited me over.

MARY

That was not strange, he deliberately denied my encroach.

Jane pours herself some wine.

JANE

My bad. At work I question strange, I question coincidence. Everything strange has an inciting incident, and it is where I usually find my answers. Most of the time I feel it's the problems that follow me like a shadow for me to solve, like math problems in high-school - I couldn't sleep without solving one. Maybe it's just me, researchers say it's logical thinkers, we use the right side of the brain.

FAWN

Betty Edwards.

JANE

Betty Edwards. When a coincidence is in front of me, I never rest my case until I find a logical explanation.

MARY

(pours herself some wine too)
Coincidences, right?

JANE

Typical ones in my line of duty are when your enemy dies the same way you could've lost your life, but coincidentally you weren't involved somehow. Strange, isn't it?

Mary puts down her glass.

MARY

Can't tell, I have no enemy.

JANE

In my interrogation room, this is where I tell you that you're good, playing a clueless little mouse.

MARY

(soft chuckle)

I had no idea I was being interrogated.

JANE

You really are good. Are you an intelligence agent?

MARY

I did a lot of role plays in my stripper days.

JANE

Ha, you learned that as a stripper.

Mary rewards her with a straight face.

JANE (CONT'D)

I mean adult worker. Shit, worse.

Beat.

Mary bursts into laughter. It's a tease, they both laugh. There is something about their laugh, it's tense and empty.

JANE (CONT'D)

You got me good...

(to Fawn)

Right?

Fawn remains silent.

MARY

This was fun, there were times where I was wondering "are we still talking about the powdered milk in pasta?" We were still talking about the pasta, right?

JANE

No.

MARY

Are you teasing me back?

JANE

Certainly not. Walter was killed last night in a car accident.

MARY

What?

JANE

The postmortem isn't ready yet, but the paramedics argued...

MARY

Don't know how to feel.

FAWN

Not even a septic? You shared a part of your life with him.

MARY

(ignores Fawn)
Murder, so you say.

Jane's phone beeps. She reads and slips it back into the pocket and gulps all the remaining wine in her glass.

JANE

Yeah, investigation is ongoing. Let me leave you to it then, something's come up.

She gets up and leaves.

Mary clunks the cutlery onto her plate, frustrated. She leaves the table.

Fawn sits for a while. His phone then receives a text. He reads it.

TEXT MESSAGE: WHERE DO YOU WANNA PUT THEM?

INT. JANE'S HOUSE/ BEDROOM - NIGHT

Fawn is smoking his joint by Jane's bedroom window, topless, wrinkling her dress that she threw in the chair, by his back.

JANE

I just want someone who knows what the T. in my names stands for, someone who looks at me all night while I snore and still loves every second of it. One who rubs my feet after a long day of chasing criminals.

FAWN

What's changed?

JANE

I had an encounter with two of my colleagues earlier. A mop used to mop their drool on the floor would take a year to dry. None of that wouldn't happen if I have a shiny band in my finger... I'm not getting any younger you know; I can't sneak around forever.

They stay quiet for some time.

JANE (CONT'D)

Are you happy though?

FAWN

Why are you asking me this?

JANE

I don't know, I just... What is it that you said I had to hear?

She blocks Fawn's answer.

JANE (CONT'D)

She told me a story you know, when I helped her with the ring. About her mother. The old woman hadn't been in her life since ever, and she was repulsed by her daughter. And when she returned, she had a condition of stammering - which her daughter too had at the slightest.

JANE (CONT'D)

The condition was somehow helpful in emotionally winning her over because she felt some kind of connection to the old lady, that maybe she inherited the trait. Then one day she caught the old lady speaking perfectly fine with someone on the phone, apparently, she'd been faking it. She couldn't believe she actually believed she inherited the stammering, and suddenly she was miserable, so she chased her out, for good. What do you think?

FAWN

What should I be thinking? That traits cannot be inherited. That she didn't inherit nothing from her old lady.

JANE

But she did, no? Mary would walk on coals to get what she wants, no? Just like her mother.

JANE (CONT'D)

It's taking me back to what my father used to tell my brother when he started dating in high school; cheat on Brenda, use Pearl, but never, ever, mess with a girl named Mary. Am I hot in what you wanted to confess?

The camera pulls out on the two, slowly.

FAWN

She's telling the perfect story.

JANE

I need two versions from you: her perfect story, and the truth.

FAWN

Okay.

Fawn leans in and starts talking. The words are inaudible.

EXT. JANE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A wide view of her house with one window bright yellow from the light.

JANE (O.S)
We need to straighten out the
Panel-beater.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT/ CAPTAIN'S OFFICE - DAY

A table sign is labeled "CAPTAIN JAMIE DUIKER". Duiker is a bald white man in his sixties.

CAPTAIN DUIKER
What the hell is wrong with you BO?

BO
Captain...

CAPTAIN DUIKER
What part of "take some time off"
don't you understand? I knew
letting you come to the station on
your leave was not ideal, but not
because I actually believed you
would do this.

BO
He's guilty, I know it.

CAPTAIN DUIKER
There you go again. I'm going to
need your badge.

BO
You can't do that.

CAPTAIN DUIKER
And your gun.

BO relinquishes what is ordered to him.

BO
Captain...

CAPTAIN DUIKER
And this time I mean it. Take some
fucking time off and do something
unrelated to work. Go out, Jesus,
when was the last time you smiled.

BO leaves.

Duiker checks BO's .38 revolver magazine.

CAPTAIN DUIKER (CONT'D)
 (to himself)
 And he's shot of bullets...
 (screams)
 BO!

INT. BO'S HILUX - DAY

He parks in front of Fawn's yard. He thinks for a while.

He gets out of the car.

EXT. FAWN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

He walks on the lawn to the front door. He knocks.

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Mary comes to the door. She is not pregnant. She opens.

MARY
 Detective, please come on in.

BO marches in.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

He takes a seat.

MARY
 Can I get you something to drink?

BO
 It's come to my attention that you
 serve the best coffee.

MARY
 Don't believe everything you read
 Detective. I just serve the best
 tea that Fawn believed--

BO
 --believed you're the tea yourself.
 That I also read and believed.

MARY
 But you've read the coffee version.

BO
Right. Why did he lie about that?

MARY
(on her way to the
kitchen)
I really don't know Detective.

She's in the kitchen.

BO searches the contents of the house with his eyes.

MARY (CONT'D)
But what I can tell you is that I
serve the best tea and he served
the best coffee that I believed
he's the coffee himself. Who still
makes coffee by the stove-top
kettle.

BO scoffs.

BO
I'll still want some coffee though.

MARY (O.S.)
Don't say I didn't warn you.

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mary comes from the kitchen holding a cup of coffee and a cup
of tea. She hands the coffee to BO.

BO
Do you know that coffee is more
likely to spill from a cup than
beer?

Mary sits.

MARY
Because of the foam content, I
guess.

BO
The brains on you. Anything
interesting about your drink?

MARY
Did you know that tea can boil for
over a hundred degrees Celsius?

BO

No way, water boils at hundred degrees.

MARY

Once you mix it with tea it's no longer pure water.

BO

Since you're believed to be the tea...

(he sips)

You can tolerate extreme temperatures.

MARY

What's your point?

BO

Tough nut to crack.

MARY

I have nothing in common with tea.

BO

Maybe coffee then. Back in 1511 leaders in Mecca believed coffee was responsible for radical thinking, that's what got me addicted to coffee in the first place.

MARY

What do you want Detective?

BO

I need you to narrate that day one last time.

MARY

I made it clear that I don't want to press charges. I believe he will change.

BO

I'm a homicide detective, I won't give you a lecture on domestic violence.

MARY

I see what this is, you're trying to get me to say something that will be used against him. I need to call our lawyer...

BO

There won't be any need of that. Just say exactly what you said in your statement, and it won't change a thing since you're not pressing any charges.

She puts away the tea and prepares to talk.

BO takes out a pen and a small notebook.

MARY

He was so disappointed when he found out the baby, I was carrying was not his--

BO

Please I'm only interested in the day.

MARY

I'm getting there... It was when he proposed to me. He confirmed on a phone call, and he got angry. He dragged me out of the ceremony fuming.

INSERT CUT: FAWN DROPS MARY IN THE ELEVATOR AND ASSAULTS HER.

BO (V.O)

What about the miscarriage?

MARY

The thought of him knowing terrified me, I wasn't faking it.

BO

What happened after? And Walter?

MARY

It was just a plot in the book to keep you thrilled, we never met Walter after the confrontation.

BO

So, you only hit the gate that night?

MARY

Yes. And it was a burden to him when it turned out the baby was okay.

She starts crying.

MARY (CONT'D)
His anger could no longer be
contained, he started hitting me.

INSERT CUT: JANE HANDS FAWN THE AWARD AND LEAVES. FAWN CLOSES
THE DOOR AND SLAMS MARY'S HEAD UP AGAINST THE DOOR AND SHE
FALLS TO THE GROUND IN FEAR.

MARY (V.O) (CONT'D)
Insulting me every day.

INSERT CUT: FAWN YELLS AT HER. SHE WEEPS ON THE FLOOR.

MARY (V.O) (CONT'D)
I was scared for my life.

INSERT CUT: FAWN ATTEMPTS TO SUFFOCATE THE SLEEPING MARY WITH
A PILLOW.

BO (V.O)
The man abused you, why don't you
want him arrested?

MARY (V.O)
It was the look on his face.
October 23rd, the day of--

BEGIN FLASHBACK.

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE/ BEDROOM - DAY

Mary (heavily pregnant), in yoga pants is in the room
preparing to leave. She takes the car keys and heads out.

INT. SAME/ STEPS - CONTINUOUS

She misses a step and falls. She rolls all the way down the
steps. She notices the blood stain on her pants.

She screams.

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Mary's bloody body is rushed on a bed by a number of nurses.
She's crying.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

Fawn enters, and he is desperate for a response from the doctor. The doctor shakes his head. He looks at the broken Mary. He comes close.

MARY (V.O)

I knew he was remorseful of all the pain he caused me.

Fawn kneels besides Mary and kisses her hand.

FAWN

(emotional)

I'm sorry. I'm sorry...

END FLASHBACK.

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM - DAY

Mary uses her last tissue.

MARY

I'm sorry I can't do this.

BO closes his notebook.

BO

Your cooperation and time is much appreciated.

MARY

What's going to happen now?

BO

You better have your fingers crossed because Fawn's fate depends on the state psychiatrist's report tomorrow.

EXT. BO'S HOUSE/ PORCH - DUSK

BO finds seated alone.

Tom sees him and he stands up to confront him.

TOM

I went over to meet you at the station.

BO

I told you not to never meet me there.

TOM

They said you were never assigned the case, and you are suspended, for the second time.

BO

I had every right.

TOM

It all comes together, this has always been about her. She's the one who told you you're a daddy's boy.

BO

It has nothing to do with it.

TOM

Stop doing this to yourself, Fawn's innocent.

BO

There is a difference between a man who says "Walter died" and the one who says "Finally, Walter died".

TOM

Are you listening to yourself now?

BO

This is the same man that said he wanted the victim varnished.

Tom walks close to him.

TOM

Stop trying to figure out the stars nature, just enjoy the view.

He leaves BO in his porch.

FADE TO:

A squeaky hoarse turning about.

EXT. FAWN'S HOUSE - EVENING

TITLE CARD: THE DAY OF MARY'S MISCARRIAGE.

Fawn's shoes get wet by the sprinkling water from the hoarse head watering the lawn.

He is deep in thought. A car beeps and sobers him up.

It's Jane's corolla at the gate, her gate.

Fawn walks to her car.

INT. JANE'S COROLLA - EVENING

Fawn settles. He finds Jane sketching in her journal - it's the flower drawing.

JANE

I'm sorry, I heard what happened.

FAWN

Lend me your car keys.

JANE

What for?

FAWN

Just lend me your car keys.

She gives him the keys.

JANE

There is something I need to tell you.

FAWN

How far along is the investigation?

Jane stops drawing, and the drawing is as unfinished as it is now in BO's possession.

JANE

That's not what was on my mind, but yeah, the facts are straight. We have a sworn statement from the doctor and the panel beater, she just needs to come over at the police station for questioning.

She pauses and looks at him.

JANE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry about what happened but she's going to have to come over at the police station for questioning, one way or another, sorry.

FAWN

Are you?

JANE

I have conscience, Jesus.

Fawn takes out a weed joint and lights it.

JANE (CONT'D)

You know you can't do that in here.

He ignores her and takes his first drag.

FAWN

Are you sorry?

JANE

Turn that off Fawn. Where are the keys?

FAWN

I'm going to need you to close the investigation, I no longer want Mary arrested.

The smoke is diffusing fast and starting to cloud the car.

JANE

She's a cold blooded killer, and you're not manipulating me into letting her walk... Bring me the keys Fawn.

She coughs.

FAWN

You're not going to close the case?

JANE

(coughing)
Is this a threat?

FAWN

I suppose you can't possibly proceed with the investigation while in the hospital bed.

She fights for the keys with no luck.

JANE

You really need to hear what I have to say to you.

She tries forcing her window open.

FAWN

Letting go of the case, is what I want from you.

She is dizzy, her veins wants to explode a green mess off her head.

JANE

Please... let me out of here.

FAWN

Will you?

With all the strength she can gather, with her head sinking on Fawn's shoulder, she says--

JANE

Fawn, I'm...

FAWN

You're?

She doesn't respond. She's still.

FAWN (V.O.)

I hadn't expected her to pass out, or if any, that fast. The internet article at the library computer said anaphylaxis patients have tolerable reactions to marijuana; high fever, headache, dehydration, but almost never, passing out because it is so rare, but possible. If they do pass out, seek medical help ASAP because the pulse is going to die down gradually.

He checks her pulse.

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

I checked her pulse, and for three seconds it remained quiet, before it beat again and went quiet for another lap - weird pulse.

He panics.

He harasses her hand-bag and finds the phone and throws the bag on Jane's lap.

Something falls into the foot well and he uses the phone's flashlight to look in there.

It is a pregnancy test, positive.

He browses in her speed dial who to call. One number is frequent, and the caller ID is Detective BO. I

He calls the number and leaves the car. After, he cleans after himself.

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Fawn finds Mary at the couch.

FAWN
She was pregnant.

MARY
Was?

INT. SAME - LATER

The couple is peaking through the slightly opened curtain.

FAWN (V.O.)
For the next fifty-five minutes we peaked through the curtain to see if anyone came over the car. Mary kept nagging me with questions: you sure nobody saw you? Who did you say you called again? Do you think she's dead? No, you can't go over there now Fawn, it's risky.

FAWN'S POINT OF VIEW: SOMEONE COMES. A WHITE TOYOTA HILUX. IT PARKS BESIDE JANE'S CAR, AND DETECTIVE BO STEPS OUT.

FAWN
I think that's him.

FAWN'S POINT OF VIEW: BO LOOKS AT JANE THROUGH THE WINDOW, AND OPENS THE DOOR.

Beat.

FAWN'S POINT OF VIEW: BO HURRIES BACK TO HIS CAR AND PULLS HIS PHONE OUT FROM THE OPENED WINDOW.

AS HE WAITS FOR THE ANSWER, HE WALKS ROUND IN CIRCLES COPING WITH THE DESPERATION. HE STOPS AS SOMEONE PICKS UP. HE TALKS FOR A BRIEF DURATION, GIVING DIRECTIONS. BO WALKS BACK TO JANE'S CAR AND THE LIGHT BECOMES ON FOR THE FIRST TIME.

Mary is looking at the shaking Fawn in disbelief.

FAWN (V.O.)

"Is there anything that can tie you with... you know?" Mary asked, and I had no power to reply.

FAWN'S POINT OF VIEW: BO LIFTS JANE OUT OF THE CAR BECAUSE HE WAS STARTING TO BECOME IMPATIENT. HE TAKES HER TO HIS CAR.

Mary walks back back, realizing.

FAWN'S POINT OF VIEW: THE BLINKING RED LIGHTS FLOODS THE STREETS. THE PARAMEDICS PUT HER INTO THE AMBULANCE AS FAST AS THEY CAN. THEY DISAPPEAR FAR UP NORTH INTO THE LONG STREET WAY, AND BO'S HILUX FOLLOWS.

FAWN

I think I killed her.

FAWN (V.O.)

"I know who to call." Mary said. "I have this doctor who owes me a big one."

FAWN

(voice crack)

I killed her.

Mary takes out her phone and dials a number.

FAWN (V.O.)

"Hey, listen. We are going to make this right. Look at me" said Mary.

Mary looks at Fawn, terrified.

INT. SAME - LATER

FAWN'S POINT OF VIEW: BO MAKES HIS RETURN. TWO POLICE VEHICLES ARRIVES. THEY'VE COME TO TAKE A LOOK AROUND THE HOUSE AND THE CAR. BO GOES OVER TO THE OTHER HOUSE AT JANE'S NEIGHBOR, AND THE REMAINING OFFICERS REWARD THEMSELVES WITH TASKS.

Mary is with Dr. Phiri (50s) far at the table watching Fawn, still at the window.

FAWN

This is it. The edge.

A knock at the front door.

Still like a bundle of wood logs, they wonder whom it is.
Mary goes for the door.

FAWN (V.O.)

It was one of the officers. They had a brief conversation. I wanted to know what Mary was saying to him. She let him in, and on they came to us in the living room.

They are all seated at the living room now, Constable Tepo, Dr. Phiri, Mary and Fawn.

CONSTABLE TEPO

Reintroducing myself now to you all, I'm constable Tepo, and I've come here to ask just a few questions. I like to think that the household is aware of the misfortune that transpired next door.

MARY

We are only just short of facts officer.

DR. PHIRI

Sorry sir, I'm Dr. Phiri and I have one suggestion for the benefit of all parties.

CONSTABLE TEPO

As you wish Doctor.

DOCTOR

I think Ms. Sebina brought to your knowledge that Mr. Johnson here is as sensitive to such matters. Now, both of them have witnessed rather an equal good deal of the events that you're hungry for answers, I think it's safe to assume Ms. Sebina can alone adhere to your questions while Mr. Johnson be excused. It is highly advised that he comes with me to the hospital as ripe as he is.

CONSTABLE TEPO

His input may be crucial with due respect Doctor.

DR. PHIRI

As equally as his health to his well-being officer.

CONSTABLE TEPO

Well, the doctor's orders; the slightest headache can be healed the other day. Wow, thanks doctor, I think Ms. Sebina's participation will be fruitful.

DR PHIRI

Bless you.

CONSTABLE TEPO

Wait doctor, if I may, just one question.

They all freeze.

CONSTABLE TEPO (CONT'D)

When's the last time Mr. Johnson was within the neighbor's reach?

FAWN

But not today constable.

CONSTABLE TEPO

Well, when?

FAWN

Don't know, last week?

CONSTABLE TEPO

Okay, thank you.

They leave Mary and Constable Tepo.

EXT. SOMEWHERE - DAY

A scare crow has our back at us. A deafening gun-shot sound. Far deep in the mirage, at a distance of about 100 meters, we spot two men, blurry. It's a teenage BO and his father. The scene is lucid. It's BO's dream. We never get a clear look at them for the whole scene.

Another gunshot.

BO'S FATHER

Again.

Gunshot.

BO'S FATHER (CONT'D)

Again!

BO's trying to shoot the scarecrow. He's in a shooting lecture.

BO

I'm trying.

BO'S FATHER

Criminals are continuing to roam the streets everyday. Is that what you are going to tell their victims? That you're trying?

BO

(voice crack)

No.

BO'S FATHER

Lose that hunchback of feelings and shoot some bastards.

Gunshot.

BO'S FATHER (CONT'D)

Tighten your wrists goddammit.

Gunshot.

BO

I can't.

He breaks down, sobbing.

BO'S FATHER

Jesus...

(leans)

I never sent you to police college. It was you and I want to believe that's what you wanted. I know I brought you up the hard way. It was not to be deliberately harsh on you, or force you to wind up like me in a blue uniform. I wanted you to be able to stand your ground, it's an unforgiving world.

BO's cry dies down.

BO'S FATHER (CONT'D)

Now, are we reacting or acting son?

Same time as the gunshot--

BO

Acting.

BO'S FATHER

What?

Gunshot.

BO

(louder)

Acting.

BO'S FATHER

What are you? Conductor of a mute orchestra? Are we reacting, or acting.

BO

(roars)

Acting!

The shot this time drills and burns the top half of the scarecrow's tiny head.

BO'S FATHER

Now repeat it until you can't not do it.

The frame instantly cuts to BO's drastically opening eyes, waking up. He's sweating. He looks besides him at the clock, it's 5:36 AM.

EXT. SABRANA HOSPITAL - MORNING

Wide view of the institute as the fog wears off.

BO's car, followed by Tom's, pass a large sign that says "SABRANA PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL"

FAWN (V.O.)

A human brain is a human brain, as blunt as that - telling it not to think of butterflies will make it think of butterflies.

INT. SABRANA HOSPITAL/ HALLWAY - MORNING

Mary, BO, Tom and Dr. Phiri walk in the hallway.

FAWN (V.O.)

I've been admitted in Sabrana Hospital for exactly two months now. I've counted the days ever since because it is the only logical hobby here.

They get in one of the rooms.

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

Every Wednesday and Friday Dr. Phiri and his descendants' study and revise me in this automated room of theirs. My condition, as they keep reminding me, is a rare one - they haven't had the case in years. Dr Phiri says it is caused by mostly depression, and grief, because one fabricates events and feeds them to the brain in repetition until it registers as facts, it is mostly paranoia really. As far as I'm concerned, I'm stuck between "he is nuts, none of it happened" and "he is nuts, every bit of it happened."

INT. SAME/ ASSESSMENT ROOM.

They are looking at Fawn through the glass, signing the papers and clearing out. He's wearing a white two-piece with black stripes.

Fawn isn't aware the group is discussing him, he can't see them from inside.

DR. PHIRI

If I dealt with this case in my younger days, I would have easily retired an important man.

Dr. Phiri shuffles his files and gives BO one.

They both page the files.

BO

From the top, we've all been characters in his world.

(MORE)

BO (CONT'D)

The reason he never completed the book is that he was overwhelmed by the anxiety and the false guilt he was burdened with.

(turns to Mary)

I'm sorry but he never really met you. You were just a cute blonde girl a protagonist relishes, and went with the flow. He invested himself in the character that he became him.

Tom requests the file from Dr. Phiri.

MARY

Is he okay now?

DR. PHIRI

The trick was to interrogate Fawn to see if he was involved in the murders.

BO

Was he?

DR. PHIRI

Honestly he did not confess to any of the crimes he's accused of. All I can say is he believed he did those things because of the cunning coincidences.

BO and Tom exchange looks--

BO

How do you know?

DR. PHIRI

I guess that's your line of work, if the proof suggests otherwise the truth is actually that, otherwise.

(he grins)

Even if he did, now that we managed to get rid of him, we would have to get him back so that we try the real culprit of the crimes.

TOM()

They do that in court?

BO

If the concept's brought in trial he can get away with it.

DR. PHIRI

They! It's two people remember?

TOM

But only one of the two is a criminal.

DR. PHIRI

Frankly, yes.

TOM

But you said--

MARY

So Doctor, I'll be going home with the man I've never met in my life?

BO just looks at the clueless Fawn through the glass. We zoom in on him slowly.

DR. PHIRI

It's not much of a task really because I prepared him, he knows what he's going to be dealing with. I advice you to be his caretaker for some time. You two will decide what's best for the two of you when he's back on his feet.

Fawn turns and looks their way, but not to any one in particular.

FAWN (V.O.)

I started acknowledging that the fateful night might have not gone like I remember because my memory is unreliable.

INT. SAME/ CLEARING ROOM CONTINUOUS

Fawn is given a file of papers to sign off by the nurse next to her. The scene starts off from the time we first saw him in this scene. It plays the same way we perceived him through the transparent glass.

FAWN (V.O.)

It would appear funny that upon my first night, I was one of the shoddier patients. I was admitted in the ward of the criminally insane.

(MORE)

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

I met a patient there during meals, Theo Cooper was his name, who had killed his two daughters as a ritual to bring back their deceased mother. He sent them to call his wife, he told me, only if the doctors would believe him, they are coming back on Christmas, God said so. The problem was that he's been saying that for the past seven years, his mind is lazy to produce new memories more so that he still believes Christmas is around the corner so he be reunited with his family. They kept a cast iron calendar in his cell so he could anticipate his reunion. By next Christmas, which was two weeks ago, he had a breakdown and the memories of the murders and the least of his remaining mind evaporated just like that. All he recites now is "Just kill me you son of a bitch," to anyone who dares and looks at him.

He finishes clearing off and he is given a box filled with the clothes he came in with.

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

Before Theo became arrogant, he told me this while we were at the cafeteria. Sanity is overrated because no one is really normal, everyone is crazy in their own way. So, what a mental institution really does is lock away the most normal group of people in the society.

He leaves the room with the box.

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

Mad people are fed medication to be scaled down to the socially accepted dosage of normal.

INT. SAME/ HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

He walks in the idle hallway. His footsteps are the only sound audible, other than the voiceover.

FAWN (V.O.)

That is exactly what they did to me, they forced me to believe their own interpretation of the truth, to hell with my straight facts. Psychiatrists should be people who've at least went nuts for once in their lives, people who know what it's like to have Tupac and Lincoln in the same room.

INT. BO'S HILUX - DAY

He's driving around in the familiar neighborhood. Jane's favorite country folk music plays on the radio.

He stops at a distance from Fawn's house. He gazes in a distance as Mary and Dr. Phiri are talking in front of the house.

He gets off the car.

EXT. BRAD'S HOUSE - DAY

He walks in the lawn. He arrives at them.

BO
Mary, Doctor.

DR. PHIRI
Detective.

BO
How's the big man doing?

MARY
Getting there. He's inside.

BO
Can I see him?

Mary and Dr. Phiri consider.

MARY
Let me walk the Doctor out. I'll accompany you to him shortly.

BO
I won't be long actually it's just a short man talk.

She doesn't want to agree. But--

MARY

Okay.

BO gets in the house.

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE/DINNING ROOM - DAY

BO sits far across Fawn at the table.

BO

Hey champ.

No answer.

BO (CONT'D)

Do you know me?

FAWN

I was advised to let go of some memories. You may or not be piece of that realm.

BO

A nobody, that's what I am then. Interested in knowing me?

FAWN

Do I have a choice?

BO

Not really. Since I have all the time in the world, how about we wait for your fiancé so she can--
(laughs)
Prepare us coffee, because I heard she's so good at it some suspect she's the coffee herself.

The joke falls flat, he doesn't know what BO is on about.

BO (CONT'D)

Forgive my joke delivery, it isn't top tier. Do you want to hear my best one.

FAWN

Please.

BO

Here is the trick; you give me a topic. Anything.

FAWN
Dinner table.

BO
That is too easy. Why don't we try something challenging like a thief, who can make a joke about a thief?

FAWN
Dinner table is more challenging.

BO
Are you refusing to hear my "thief" joke?

FAWN
Am I?

BO laughs, and Fawn is losing interest.

BO
Okay, here it goes: have you realized that thieves have jerking off vibes?

Fawn offers a dry chuckle.

BO (CONT'D)
No just look at how a typical thief operates, he makes sure no one's around, he does his filthy deeds thereafter he cums, I mean leave--

Nothing, BO can tell he is bored.

BO (CONT'D)
Okay, what I'm trying to say is thieves are just masturbators that are at a professional level.

FAWN
(scoffs)
Smart.

BO
Come to think of it, Robin Hood was a world class masturbator--

Fawn laughs subtly.

FAWN
That surprisingly turned out good.

BO
Oh really? I made it up it's my
masterpiece I didn't even write it
down.

BO searches for the expression from Fawn's face and is
disappointed to learn that he's rather impressed than angry.

BO (CONT'D)
I wonder what you did to deserve
her. It would have been a different
case if she were another woman.

FAWN
That I'm not sure of. You know what
they say, never trust a couple
that's all lovey dove on the
sidewalks.

BO
(laughs)
They could be sitting on a pile
dark--

FAWN
If you keep digging, yes.

BO
I'm sure that's not the case. I
think you two deserve each other.

He stands.

BO (CONT'D)
It was nice chatting with you.

FAWN
What about coffee?

BO freezes.

FAWN (CONT'D)
Or your name?

BO throws him a dry grin and walks away. He meets Mary on his
way out.

MARY
How did it go.

BO
Good. My work is done here, I'm
glad he is doing well.

MARY
Coffee?

BO
No, thanks.

Mary walks in and BO out.

INT. BO'S HILUX - DAY - MOVING

BO is listening to headphones. He bugged the house.

FAWN OVER HEADPHONES
Who was he?

MARY OVER HEADPHONES
Just a homicide detective. He was
the one investigating the death of
our former neighbor.

FAWN OVER HEADPHONES
Jane?

MARY OVER HEADPHONES
Yes. The doctor advices we don't
dwell much into that, but focus in
progress. And you should take some
time off from writing. The doctor
said the first days are going to be
rocky but a lot of exercises will
be crucial.

FAWN OVER HEADPHONES
What do we do in our first
exercise?

MARY OVER HEADPHONES
Spring cleaning--

BO hits the brakes. Then pulls over.

MARY OVER HEADPHONES (CONT'D)
We are going to clean every inch of
this house.

BO punches the steering wheel and it lets out a stunted beep.

FAWN OVER HEADPHONES
We better get started then.

A chair screeches on the floor through the headphones.

MARY OVER HEADPHONES
Coffee, before we begin?

FAWN OVER HEADPHONES
Yes--

BO strips off the headphones.

He closes his eyes.

TOM (V.O.)
Stop trying to figure out the
nature of the stars.

He looks at his bush beard in the rear mirror.

CAPTAIN DUIKER (V.O.)
Jesus, when was the last time you
smiled?

He closes his eyes and takes a deep breath.

JANE (V.O.)
You know what's worse than a
mommy's boy? A daddy's boy.

He puts the headphones in the box on the seat beside him. It is stacked with his belongings from the office. He takes out a CD from the car's radio, it's Jane's music. He takes out his wallet and slips out a photo of him and his father. He looks at it for a while, and puts it in the file too.

EXT. HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

He gets off his car with the box and he puts it by the sidewalk.

INT. BO'S HILUX - MOMENTS LATER

He opens the windows to get the feel of the fresh air. He turns on the radio and a light hearted podcast is on air. He's moving on.

He starts the car.

EXT. HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

BO's Hilux gets lost in a busy highway, becoming a cog in a vast machine of vehicles - just another car in a normal traffic.

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM - DAY

BO passes Mary at the door.

MARY
How did it go.

BO
Good. My work is done here, I'm
glad he is doing well.

MARY
Coffee?

BO
No, thanks.

Mary walks in and BO out.

INT. FAWN'S HOUSE/DINNING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mary is next to Fawn at the table. She writes something on
the paper and shows it to Fawn.

MARY'S NOTE: WRITE WHAT YOU MEAN ON THE PAPER, THERE MAY BE A
WIRE AROUND HERE.

FAWN
Who was he?

Fawn writes back.

FAWN'S NOTE: OR, I SHOULD EXPOSE YOU RIGHT NOW.

MARY
Just a homicide detective. He was
the one investigating the death our
former neighbor.

She writes back.

MARY'S NOTE: WE'VE BEEN THROUGH THAT BEFORE. YOU KNOW I'VE
ALWAYS TOLD A BETTER STORY.

FAWN
Jane?

Fawn writes back.

MARY

Yes. The doctor advised that we shouldn't don't dwell much into that but focus in making progress. And you should take some time off from writing. The doctor said the first days are going to be rocky, but a lot of exercises will be crucial.

FAWN'S NOTE: IT'S TIME TO END IT ALL NOW, PUT A STOP ON ALL THIS CIRCUS.

FAWN

What do we do in our first exercise?

MARY

Spring cleaning--

Mary writes.

MARY'S NOTE: I QUIT MY LIFE TO BE WITH YOU, I GOT MY HANDS DIRTY TO MAKE THIS WORK. I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE.

MARY

We are going to clean every inch of this house.

Fawn writes.

FAWN

We better get started then.

FAWN'S NOTE: YOU'RE CRAZY!

MARY'S NOTE: ABOUT YOU.

A chair screeches on the floor as they both stand.

MARY

Coffee, before we begin.

FAWN

Yes, I really don't have a choice. Or maybe it's you I need saving from.

Mary gazes at him with flaming eyes.

MARY
 (fake laugh)
 Ha, funny man you are, aren't you?

BRAD'S LIVING - NIGHT

Brad is at his usual seat waiting to be served.

BRAD (V.O)
 Amid the elixir she needs,

Mary walks in the room (she's pregnant), holding two plates of food.

BRAD (V.O) (CONT'D)
 Hating her is a ferocious deed.

She gives him his food and sits at her usual seat. They look into each other's eyes.

BRAD (V.O) (CONT'D)
 I wish I could say someone was coming to save me.

MARY
 Tommy should have agreed on your proceeding with the book, and stop being a coward about it.

INSERT CUT: TOM IS UNCONSCIOUS IN A BEEPING LIFE SUPPORT MACHINE IN A HOSPITAL PATIENT ROOM. HE HAS STAINED BANDAGES ON HIS HEAD.

FAWN (V.O.)
 Tommy was my last hope.

MARY
 He should've known that that's life, you're not going to live a prosperous and happily ever after just because you've never hurt a fly. It's hurting a fly that actually guarantees an effect in your life.

Fawn is haunted.

MARY (CONT'D)
 Are you not going to eat? It's going to get cold before you know it.

Fawn looks at Mary, and he takes his first spoon and eats without hesitation.

FAWN (V.O)
I used to think she will kill me in
my sleep or poison my food.

Mary rubs her tummy and smiles at Fawn.

MARY
We are going to have one big happy
family.

FAWN (V.O)
Mary can't kill me. Even after she
contorted my heart beyond repair, I
still won't hate her.

Brad gives a troubled smile.

BRAD (V.O)
So, I love Mary.

EXT. BRAD'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Wide view of the house in the dark.

FADE OUT.

THE END