

PERCHANCE TO DREAM

written by

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FADE IN

INT. CORPORATE OFFICE - DAY

RANDALL THOMPkins (twenties to early thirties) is a tall, professional white man. He sits at his desk, his head back as he sleeps. He is clearly quite out, as a few SNORTS and SNORES are heard.

A knock at the door snaps him awake. He looks around, disoriented.

RANDALL

Damn it!

He pulls himself together and makes it look like he had been working.

RANDALL (CONT'D)

Come in.

OLIVIA (25) opens the door and peaks in. She is a vapidly pretty office worker.

OLIVIA

They're ready for you, in the conference room.

RANDALL

Ready? Ready for what?

OLIVIA

The presentation.

Randall seems lost.

RANDALL

Presentation...

OLIVIA

On the Peterson deal. You are such a kidder. The decks are all copied and waiting there for everyone.

Randall looks at her, responding a bit hesitantly.

RANDALL

And my copy?

OLIVIA

Right here, just like you asked.

She hands him a copy of the presentation. Randall looks at it and all the charts, spreadsheets, and numbers.

RANDALL

Crap!

OLIVIA

Is there something wrong?

RANDALL

Oh, no, no. Nothing wrong. I just... was hoping for some updated numbers. That's all.

He appears uncertain, and a bit disoriented.

OLIVIA

Are you OK?

RANDALL

To be honest, no. I'm not feeling so good.

OLIVIA

Do you want me to reschedule this?

RANDALL

YES! Yes I do. That would be super. And I am going to leave early. Maybe see a doctor.

He picks up his briefcase and blows past her. She is the one confused now.

OLIVIA

OK. I'll take care of it. You just feel better, OK?

INT. TAXICAB - DAY

Randall sits in back, looking at the street scenes as he goes by. He is in a major city. Traffic is heavy, people walk by, talking on cell phones. An ordinary city day.

He seems overly fascinated. A MAN with wild colored hair walks by and his head snaps to follow him.

He sees a sign for a risque show, and his eyes gets big as he looks at it. All in all, it is as if this were all new to him.

The CAB DRIVER (50), a stocky Hispanic man, looks back at him.

CABBIE

So you still haven't told me where you want me to take you.

RANDALL

What?

CABBIE

You just told me to drive. So I'm driving. But at some point, you got to give me a address. Unless you just want to run up the fare and pay for my daughter's college. Which is fine by me, by the way.

RANDALL

Oh, yeah, yeah. No address. Just take me...

(beat)

Take me to a nice bar. There must be one near here.

CABBIE

Starting a bit early, huh? Long day?

RANDALL

You have no idea.

INT. NICE URBAN BAR - DAY

Randall walks in. The bar is nice, but mostly empty. A few individuals are already drinking. The BARTENDER (30) is a pretty black woman. She acknowledges him as he walks in, sizing him up as well.

BARTENDER

You're new around here. What can I get you?

RANDALL

Ah, whisky's fine. Straight up.

She gets him a drink and puts it down.

RANDALL (CONT'D)

You can leave the bottle.

She raises and eyebrow but goes along.

BARTENDER

Early day?

RANDALL

What?

BARTENDER

I said, early day. You look like you left the office a bit early.

RANDALL

Yeah, I guess I did. Having a bit of a bad day.

BARTENDER

Want to talk about it?

RANDALL

Oh, believe me, you would never believe it.

BARTENDER

Try me.

RANDALL

OK, I will. Have you ever had a dream so real, that you were sure that it was really happening.

BARTENDER

Yeah, I guess so. You had that last night?

RANDALL

I'm having it right now.

BARTENDER

Right now?

Randall nods and downs a big shot.

RANDALL

Yep. All of this. All a dream. And it's a dream I keep having.

BARTENDER

So I'm not real?

RANDALL

'Fraid not.

BARTENDER

And that would mean you're not real?

RANDALL

In this dream, no.

She thinks for a moment. Without warning, she pinches his hand. He yells out.

RANDALL (CONT'D)

Ouch! What was that for.

BARTENDER

You seem real enough to me. And if this were a dream, would you have felt that?

Randall thinks about it.

RANDALL

Well, that's the only explanation I got.

BARTENDER

Now you have me curious. What are you trying to explain.

RANDALL

My life. Or I should say, this life.

BARTENDER

This life?

Randall tries to think how to say this.

RANDALL

How can I put this?

(beat)

You see, this isn't my life, my world. In reality, I am a farmer in the middle of the country.

BARTENDER

A farmer?

RANDALL

Yep. Soybeans mainly. Some corn. Got about one hundred and fifty acres. Took the farm over from my dad.

BARTENDER

Really? A farmer? You look like some sort of executive to me.

RANDALL

I know. That's what I am here. But back home, I am a farmer.

BARTENDER

So you came here for meetings or something?

RANDALL

No, you don't understand. I'm still back home, on my farm.

BARTENDER

Then who's here?

RANDALL

When I go to sleep, back home, I dream this world. This life. I am fully aware of it, and I live out a life here. Sometimes I jump multiple days, sometimes I pick up right where I left off.

BARTENDER

I see. And when you go to sleep here?

RANDALL

I am back home.

She takes the bottle away from him.

BARTENDER

I think you have had enough.

He takes it back and pour another shot, drinking it.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

So you think this is all a dream?

RANDALL

Right.

BARTENDER

Well, let me ask you this. What if this is real, and when you go to sleep here, you dream about your life as a farmer. Maybe that's the dream life.

RANDALL

I've thought that too. It's possible I guess. I just assume this is the dream world as it seems less comfortable to me. More strange. But all I know is that only one can be real. The other must be a dream.

BARTENDER

Well, I have to admit, that is the wildest story I have ever heard. And I have heard some great ones. Had a guy come in here once claiming that a witch had changed him from a dog into a man. I thought he was going to take a piss on a bar stool. But kudos to you. This is better than that.

She makes light of it, but sees he is serious. She gets more serious.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

Have you seen a doctor about this?

RANDALL

You mean, like a shrink? Yeah, once.

BARTENDER

What did they say?

RANDALL

I don't know. I feel asleep on her couch, and woke up in Nebraska. When I came back here I was in the middle of a budget meeting. All very confusing.

BARTENDER

Sounds like it.

He tries to stifle a big yawn.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

You look beat.

RANDALL

Obviously, I don't sleep well.

He yawns again, and his head starts to fall forward.

WHITE FLASH:

INT. FARMHOUSE BEDROOM - DAY

Randall sits up in bed, gasping. He looks around, then falls back onto the pillow and closes his eyes.

RANDALL

Oh, no...

WOMAN (O.S)
Honey? Time to get up. Breakfast is almost ready.

RANDALL
(to self)
And so it begins...again.

He rolls over and looks at the window. A field of corn is visible, with the breeze gently blowing.

Reluctantly, he gets up, puts on his robe and slippers, and heads out.

INT. FUTURISTIC MEDICAL FACILITY - DAY

STEVE and PETE look at a computer terminal. Both are twenty something, dressed in white, medical personnel. The two are in a room with monitors and readouts around. There is a PATIENT laying on a bed. It is not clear if he is alive.

STEVE
This doesn't look right.

Pete looks closer.

PETE
It doesn't. But what could it mean?

STEVE
I don't know. I've never seen readouts like this.

He looks at a cube on the table. There is a wire from the back going to the terminal. He picks the cube up and looks at it, then puts it back.

PETE
Any ideas?

STEVE
If I didn't know better, I would say that there was already someone in there.

He looks over at the patient.

STEVE (CONT'D)
The procedure went fine. All of his memories were transferred. But this looks like there is someone else in there, with him.

He looks at Pete.

STEVE (CONT'D)

This was a new memory storage cube,
right?

Pete hesitates.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Pete! Tell me this was a new one.

PETE

Well, not exactly, but it should be
fine.

STEVE

What do you mean, not exactly?

PETE

Well, sure, it's a reuse. But the
family objected, and the courts
made us release the pateint's
memories. So we erased it, and
under protocols we can still use
it. We've done it before.

STEVE

You did a level seven wipe down?

PETE

No, only level five.

STEVE

Damn it! Level five?

PETE

Well, you said you needed it right
away. And I didn't have time to get
a new one. The inventory is down
with all the requests we've had. I
figure a five was fine.

STEVE

Great, just great. I don't think
you got it all. We've got two pools
of memories in there now.

PETE

Really? You think so?

STEVE

That's what I'm seeing here.

PETE

That would be a nightmare for him.
For both of them.

STEVE

It would. Somehow the two memories
will have to find a way to coexist.
I don't know how they'll do it.

PETE

Maybe we should... just erase...

STEVE

Erase Thompkin's memories? I don't
think so. His family paid a lot to
keep his essence alive.

He looks at the body.

STEVE (CONT'D)

We barely got this out before he
passed. We can't try again.

PETE

What if we said it didn't take?
Sometimes it doesn't.

Steve looks at Pete, thinking. He looks around to see if
anyone is watching. His finger hovers over the delete key.

INT. FARMHOUSE KITCHEN - DAY

Randall sits at the table having a cup of coffee. His WIFE, a
pleasant looking middle aged woman, is busy about the
kitchen.

WIFE

So what's in store for today?

RANDALL

Huh? Oh, well, I was thinking about
spending some time on that tractor.
It hasn't been quite right. Then
maybe run into town.

WIFE

If you do, could you stop at the
store for me? I need some more
flour.

RANDALL

Sure, sure. I can do that.

She looks at him, concerned.

WIFE

You OK? You seem distracted.

Randall looks out of the window. As he does, the outdoors begins to fade to a whiteness, that expands to engulf the whole scene.

FADE OUT.

THE END