

"PAPER DREAMS"

A short film by  
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FINAL DRAFT  
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"PAPER DREAMS"

FADE IN:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

A road cleaves a path through an otherwise barren and bleak landscape.

A solitary grey crow perched on a telephone pole breaks the silence with a shrill caw.

A figure ambles in the distance, the movements laboured and heavy.

INT. SURGERY - DAY

ADAM (20's) awkward and apologetic looking, fidgets nervously in his seat.

CLAIRE (40's) sharp and keen witted, surveys him with professional interest.

ADAM

I'm, I'm better, I think.

INT. ADAM'S ROOM - DAY

Adam sits slumped on the floor by his bed. He takes a swig from a naggen of vodka.

A cut throat razorblade lies on the floor, bloodied.

INT. CHANNEL 7 STUDIO - NIGHT

CLAIRE

I'm saying that in my opinion,  
these people are being  
exploited.

The HOST (50's) a polished man in a neatly pressed suit, sits opposite her.

HOST

Knowingly exploited, is that  
what you're saying?

EXT. CARPARK - MORNING

Rows of barriers snake along the open space glinting in the morning sun. Bunting buffets gently in the breeze.

A large sign reads 'Harmony Auditions'.

EXT. CARPARK - LATER

Crowds of eager HOPEFULS are herded and corralled towards the barriers by ATTENDANTS in hi-vis vests. The crowd files their way through the metal maze towards the entrance.

EXT. CARPARK - LATER STILL

Adam waits patiently in the crowd, hoodie up, his hands thrust in his pocket, staring at the ground.

INT. ADAM'S ROOM - DAY

A lone tear streams down Adam's face, illuminated by the TV that drones in front of him.

Adam grits his teeth and grimaces.

The raw edge of a shiny razorblade carves its way along skin, slicing a vein.

Adam sighs. His pupils dilate.

INT. WIRED ELECTRONICS - DAY

A CUSTOMER gestures irately at Adam.

CUSTOMER

Look at this, useless.

He trusts a battered iPod in Adams face.

ADAM

We can replace it.

CUSTOMER

And this helps how, huh? You stood right there and said this was the best on the market. Absolute crap, I'm complaining you to the manager.

An attractive preppy girl, AMY(20's) interrupts the exchange.

AMY

Excuse me is there a problem?

CUSTOMER

This guy is the problem, a brain dead fucking moron.

AMY

While I understand you're upset, you have no right to abuse staff here. Customer care would be more than happy to deal with your complaint.

Amy points him towards another side of the shop. With a defiant snort, he marches off.

EXT. WIRED ELECTRONICS - LATER

Adam sits on the steps beside the loading bay, dragging on a cigarette.

Amy exits behind him and props herself on the steps. She casually lifts the cigarette from his hand.

ADAM

Thanks.

AMY

Forget it, he was an asshole.

ADAM

Yeah.

AMY

You need to speak up more.

ADAM

I do.

INT. SURGERY - DAY

ADAM

I made a friend.

CLAIRE

That's great.

ADAM

She's nice.

CLAIRE

Do you like your job?

ADAM

I'm concentrating on my songs.

CLAIRE

That's good I'm glad you have a focus.

INT. HARMONY AUDITION - BACKSTAGE

Adam smooths out a crumpled piece of paper, the smudged words are scratched in an erratic fashion.

Adam taps his foot nervously.

A CREW MEMBER approach with a clipboard in hand.

CREW MEMBER

You're on.

INT. HARMONY AUDITION - STAGE

ADAM'S POV

A cluster of blinding lights rain down from above, reaching out from a sea of darkness.

Adam looks to the Crew Member and nods his head.

The intro music plays.

INT. ADAM'S ROOM - DAY

The timer on the HD player advances a digit at a time. Adams face fills the TV screen.

He tentatively opens his mouth and sings.

His first few notes are nervous and strained.

CLAIRE (V.O.)

The producers screen those who audition.

INT. HARMONY AUDITION - JUDGES PODIUM

The JUDGES look at Adam with disfavour.

CLAIRE (V.O.)

They select exactly who they want on camera, good and bad, all in the name of entertainment.

INT. ADAM'S ROOM - DAY

Adam sits on his bed, the TV remote in his hand.

INT. CHANNEL 7 STUDIO - NIGHT

CLAIRE

Some of the people they put through have serious mental health issues.

HOST

Are they doing this for rating?

CLAIRE

I'm hardly suggesting that they would knowingly put someone with a mental health problem on TV for ratings.

INT. SURGERY - DAY

CLAIRE

You are still taking your medication?

Adam bites his nails. He avoids eye contact.

ADAM

Yes. But, I'm better now.

INT. ADAM'S BATHROOM - DAY

Adam pops a container of tablets and spills the contents on the basin surround.

He gulps down a fist of tablets and knocks back a mouth full of vodka.

He leans into the mirror and traces the outline of his bloodshot eyes then smashes the vodka bottle against his reflection.

INT. HARMONY AUDITION - JUDGES PODIUM

JUDGE #1

You want to be a singer, that's the dream?

ADAM

Yes.

JUDGE #1

Well your dream is my nightmare.

The audience behind the podium underscores the Judges sentiment with laughter.

Adam twitches, each laugh cutting through him.

JUDGE #2

Did you think that was good Adam?

Adam shrugs his shoulders.

JUDGE #3

I liked your song, but your vocals Adam need a lot of work.

INT. ADAM'S ROOM - DAY

A pool of blood meanders across naked floor boards.

A piece of paper held loosely in Adam's hand is swept softly aside by the pool until it is enveloped and drowned.

INT. HARMONY AUDITION - STAGE

HOST (V.O.)

Do you feel a measure of  
responsibility, a measure of  
guilt?

The Judges share a silent exchange of words with each other.

INT. AMY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Amy lies on the couch watching Harmony on TV.

CLAIRE (V.O.)

We are all responsible.

INT. HARMONY AUDITION - STAGE

Adam trudges slowly off stage, dejected.

FADE OUT:

END