

SUGARCOAT

Screenplay By
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INT. APARTMENT - DAY

ETHAN - an ageing man sits at a typewriter. The room is old, he hasn't shaved and is experiencing writers block.

He stares at the blank page while smoking a cigarette.

ETHAN

This is your livelihood and your
going to fucking write something
otherwise you'll end up fucking
homeless on the fucking street.

Ethan dashes the cigarette and drops his head.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Ethan leaves the shower wearing a towel. He sits on a queen size bed whilst on the phone

ETHAN

Hi I'd like to book an appointment
with a specialist please. This
morning. Yes ok. nine is fine.

He grabs a shirt from a shared cabinet.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Ethan walks to his appointment. From his clothes we know it must be cold. He smokes. He passes a young kid and mother on a newspaper route.

The young boy looks up at Ethan sympathetically, offering him a newspaper.

Ethan checks he has an envelope in his jacket.

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

Ethan sits in the waiting room. On one side, a young couple hold each other sobbing. On the other, a young MAN straight off the beat holds a saxophone. He wears black leather and sunglasses.

He speaks to Ethan with a casual indifference.

MAN

You got a light?

Ethan finds and flicks up his lighter.

(CONTINUED)

MAN
Cigarette?

Ethan pulls out a cigarette for the man.

MAN
Thank you kindly. Creative problems
again? Arts a bitch.

The young couple have begun loudly making out. The
receptionist hits the keyboard loudly as a phone rings
rather loud.

ETHAN
No I don't want any.

They proceed waiting separately. SAMANTHA - wearing official
but inexpensive student clothes comes out and whispers with
the RECEPTIONIST.

Ethan notices them talking. Samantha walks to Ethan.

SAMANTHA
Sir, you wanted to see me?

He nods. They move towards her office.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

They sit across from each other. Water on a coffee table
between them. Ethan inspects his surroundings.

SAMANTHA
How are you feeling?

ETHAN
Not good. I can't sleep and I can't
do my work. I think its my wife.

SAMANTHA
What about her?

ETHAN (O.S)
I see her sometimes and then I keep
seeing her and it doesn't stop.

BEGIN MONTAGE

We see photos, sequential in order of Ethan and his wife
throughout their lives. They seem happy in some but a
certain distance becomes apparent.

END MONTAGE

(CONTINUED)

Ethan pulls out the envelope and hands it to her.

ETHAN

I have something of hers that I think I should read. Here. I need you to tell me what you think.

Samantha takes the envelope, scans it's contents and hands it back.

SAMANTHA

Why do you want to read it so badly?

ETHAN

I just think it will help ok?

Samantha defers to her patients judgement. Ethan pulls a red sheet of craft paper from the envelope. He begins to read his wife's suicide note.

ETHAN (O.S)

Dearest Ethan, I have made up my mind and I hope you have the common decency to not try to stop me. I have tried once before, this time I need to. Truly. My heart has bled too long. I cannot forgive myself for being around. I hope you can forgive me.

BEGIN MONTAGE

As Ethan reads we see more images of both his wife and Ethan. We end on an image of an empty apartment.

END MONTAGE

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ethan enters the apartment. It is much later in the evening. We get the sense that he is only now returning. He moves to sit at his writing desk. This mornings cigarette is still in the ash tray.

He pauses a moment before closing himself behind the bedroom door.

FADE OUT

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Ethan sits at his writing desk. He stares at a blank page while smoking a cigarette.

After a long moment, he dashes the cigarette. The ash tray is now almost full.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Ethan leaves the shower wearing a towel. He sits on a queen sized bed whilst on the phone.

ETHAN

Hi I'd like to book an appointment with a specialist please. This morning. Yes ok. Nine is fine.

He grabs a shirt from a shared cabinet.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Now dressed, he sits at the dining table eating breakfast. Ethan reads a newspaper and flicks through the stations of a small television box.

The programs grab his attention. Banter between the WEATHERMAN, ANCHOR and CO-ANCHOR.

WEATHERMAN

Well it looks like it'll all be rather cloudy through most of the long weekend but we should be looking to see some sunshine early next week; Angela, Dave.

ANCHOR

We certainly hope so Mike. We'll be checking back in with you very soon.

CO-ANCHOR

Thanks Mike. Now have you ever wondered whether flossing and brushing your teeth all the time are worth it?

ANCHOR

I know I have.

They laugh at the same time.

(CONTINUED)

ANCHOR

Well a new study by researchers in
Belgium has shown, maybe it isn't -

Ethan switches off the television. He moves his bowl of food
away and scans the paper.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Ethan walks to his appointment. From his clothes we know it
must be cold. He smokes. The same kid from before looks up
at him sympathetically. They hold each other within their
sight.

The young boy offers him a newspaper.

Ethan checks he has the envelope in his jacket.

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

Ethan sits in the waiting room. On one side, the couple from
before sit separate, as if unaware of each other. The man
from before now holds a violin.

He speaks to Ethan with a casual indifference.

MAN

You got a light?

Ethan gives the man his lighter.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Samantha and Ethan sit across from each other. Ethan reads
his wife's suicide note.

His words tremble upon being received.

ETHAN

Dearest Ethan, I have made up my
mind and I hope you have the common
decency to not try to stop me. I
have tried once before, this time I
need to. Truly. My heart has bled
too long. I cannot forgive myself
for being around. I hope you can
forgive me.

As he finishes reading Samantha begins laughing. She fights
to hold it back.

Ethan studies her face hoping to comprehend.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ethan enters the apartment, it is much later in the evening. We get the sense that he is only now returning. He ignores his writing desk.

Instead, he goes to a small paper rack. He pulls today's paper from his jacket pocket and places it on top of the large, almost overflowing pile of newspapers.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Ethan stares at the blank page while smoking a cigarette. After a moment he dashes the cigarette. He notices the large amount that have compiled in the ash tray.

Ethan sweeps them into a small trash bin.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Ethan leaves the shower whilst on a telephone. He sits on a queen sized bed.

ETHAN

Hi I'd like to book an appointment with a specialist please. This morning. Yes ok. Nine is fine.

He grabs a shirt from a shared cabinet.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Ethan sits eating breakfast from a bowl with a newspaper.

Banter between the same Weatherman, Anchor and Co-anchor from earlier.

ANCHOR

We certainly hope not Mike. We'll be checking back in with you very shortly.

CO-ANCHOR

Thanks Mike. Now have you ever wondered how much animals can comprehend you when you speak?

ANCHOR

Well I don't have any pets but I know I have.

They both laugh on cue. Ethan turns off the television. He pushes his bowl away to focus on the paper.

(CONTINUED)

He scans through it, finding nothing. Ethan gets up and goes to his newspaper rack. He flicks through to a pre-determined page each time, throwing the paper's away when he can't find it.

Right near the bottom he finds the right paper. Ethan recognises it's oldness.

At the dining table he sits carefully focused on the smallest passage in the obituaries segment.

We see only parts of the text followed by a small passport photo: devoted and loving wife of famous writer. Took her own life.

Ethan closes himself on the other side of the front door.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Ethan walks to his appointment. From his clothes we know it must be cold. He does not smoke. The young boy offers him a newspaper. Ethan ignores the boy as his mother pulls him away with apologies.

He checks has the envelope in his jacket.

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

Ethan sits in the waiting room. On one side, the young man off the beat sits holding a clarinet. On the other, only the female of the couple sits distraught.

The young man speaks to Ethan with a casual indifference.

MAN

You got a light?

Ethan checks his pockets.

ETHAN

No, sorry.

They share a casually awkward moment.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Samantha and Ethan sit across from each other. Ethan inspects his surroundings.

SAMANTHA

How are you feeling? Ethan I would like to apologise if, I haven't been professional and I'm sorry.

(CONTINUED)

Ethan pulls out the envelope from before. He hands it to her. Samantha takes it gracefully, studying Ethan's face.

ETHAN

It's something of my wife's. I want you to keep it.

They share a moment in time. Samantha holds the decaying red craft paper in her hand tenderly.

SAMANTHA

Ok.

INT. BAR - AFTERNOON

Ethan sits in an old fashioned bar with his third drink. He seems as much a part of the place as the jukebox, bartender and wooden furnishings.

He takes a gulp.

INT. RESTROOM - EVENING

Ethan urinates in a cubicle. As he goes to wash his hands he begins to break down. He slides down against the tile walls.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ethan enters the apartment. He cleans the many bowls he has used for breakfast that now populate the kitchen sink.

He bundles and ties together the few large stacks of newspapers that he has. Ethan drops them outside the front door.

He leaves the door open. Ethan stumbles to his room.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Ethan leaves the shower whilst on a telephone. He is clean shaven for the first time. He grabs a shirt off the queen sized bed.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

He sits at the typewriter staring at the blank page. An agonising moment passes. He lights and smokes a new cigarette.

The smoke drifts through the room as he dashes the cigarette and begins typing.

FADE OUT.

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9.

TITLE CARD #1 - SUGARCOAT

TITLE CARD #2 - CREDITS

THE END