

SWAN SONG

By

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OVER BLACK:

A woman's HUMMING, which lasts a moment. An unfamiliar tune...

JOAN (V.O.)
Do you hear it? I do.

TITLE: SWAN SONG

The HUMMING is slowly overtaken by a mosquito-pitched RING--

INT. CHURCH - DAY

JOAN (30s) sits in a chair during a church service. Next to her is THEODORE (30s). They're both dressed in their Sunday best.

Joan wears a cross necklace.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Joan sits at one end of the kitchen table. At the other end is Theodore. Theodore eats, while Joan picks at her food.

THEODORE (V.O.)
Hear what?

JOAN (V.O.)
It's called the swan song.

Joan sets her fork down, looks up at Theodore.

JOAN
I went somewhere today.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

The service is now over. While Theodore talks with someone outside the chapel, Joan stands by herself.

A hand rests gently on Joan's shoulder. She turns around to face a WOMAN IN WHITE, who smiles.

EXT. PLANTATION - DAY

Joan walks through an iron gate and admires the large plantation before her.

2.

THEODORE (V.O.)
What does it sound like?

At the entrance of the plantation stand three people in white clothes, one of them the Woman in White.

JOAN (V.O.)
You just have to go and see, or I
guess, hear for yourself.

THEODORE (V.O.)
I think what you're hearing is a
scam.

Joan walks into the plantation. The people in white follow behind.

INT. LARGE ROOM - DAY

Joan sits in an audience with her eyes closed (everyone else's eyes are closed too).

GARDITH (70s), long and straightened gray hair and a weathered face of wisdom, not stress, stands in front of the audience, dressed in all white. Her eyes are closed, too.

GARDITH
When you hear it, you will know.
Allow yourself to open to what lies
beyond.

Joan peeks through one eye at everyone around her.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Joan stares at her reflection. Theodore walks in.

THEODORE
You okay?

Joan blinks, snaps out of her trance.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Joan and Theodore at the kitchen table.

JOAN
Just close your eyes one day and
really listen. Open your mind.

Theodore SCOFFS at the phrase "Open your mind."

3.

INT. LARGE ROOM - DAY

The audience leaves. Joan walks up to Gardith, shy.

JOAN

Hi, um, my name's Joan.

GARDITH

Ah, yes, Joan. I noticed you peeking.

Joan, caught off guard, stutters.

JOAN

I was just wondering...what was I supposed to hear again?

Gardith studies Joan, brushes hair out of her face.

GARDITH

In due time, child.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Joan washes the dishes. She HUMS to herself.

The RING persists...

Joan, irritated, uses a finger to clean her ear out, but to no avail. She grinds her teeth, HUMS louder, scrubs the dishes HARDER.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Joan and Theodore sit during a service. A slight RING persists in the background. Joan shakes her head, irritated.

She scratches her neck. It is apparent now that she is not wearing a cross necklace this time.

INT. UPSTAIRS ROOM - DAY

The sun shines peacefully into the room and brightens it up. In the corner, occupying a rocking chair, is Joan. She looks tired. No, exhausted.

She rocks in the CREAKY chair. She HUMS the unfamiliar tune.

4.

INT. LARGE ROOM - DAY

Joan walks away from Gardith, before--

GARDITH
Oh, my child...

Joan turns around.

GARDITH
When your song begins, sing with
it. Spread the sound.

Joan, confused, turns away and exits.

INT. HOME OFFICE - DAY

Down the hallway is the home office, in which THEODORE sits and examines papers, a computer screen, lists of numbers--

Joan's HUMMING continues (O.S.).

THEODORE
What song is that you're singing?

JOAN (O.S.)
My swan song.

THEODORE
I like it.

Theodore begins to HUM with her.

INT. UPSTAIRS ROOM - DAY

Joan continues to rock in the rocking chair as she stares into oblivion.

The mosquito-pitched RING fades in--

THEODORE (V.O.)
DON'T!

INT. HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

Theodore stands in the bathroom with Joan, who has a GUN to her head.

THEODORE
Please...don't...

5.

JOAN

I...can't...take it anymore...

THEODORE

Take what anymore?

JOAN

I'm just so...tired...It's just too much...

THEODORE

I can help. We can help.

Joan shakes her head, uncooperative.

THEODORE

Joan, please...

Joan continues to CRY.

Her grip TIGHTENS on the trigger.

Theodore slowly holds his hands up in reassurance.

THEODORE

You're okay. You're here. Just breathe.

JOAN

What do I do? It won't stop!

THEODORE

What won't stop?

JOAN

You don't hear it?

THEODORE

Honey...I don't know what you're talking about...

Joan struggles to speak.

THEODORE

Just...just...

(beat)

...sing to me, Joan. Sing your swan song.

Joan stares at Theodore, the gun still to her head, tears welling inside her eyes.

Then, she closes her eyes, and she begins to HUM.

6.

She HUMS that familiar, yet unfamiliar tune.

As she HUMS, Theodore watches, captivated.

It reverberates against the walls, ceiling, floor. It surrounds them.

The mosquito-pitched RING fades in, almost unnoticeable...

It's a moment that seems to last forever.

Finally, she finishes.

All is silent.

She opens her eyes, and she smiles.

BLAM!

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. UPSTAIRS ROOM - DAY

A mosquito-pitched RING fills the air.

The rocking chair CREAKS as it slowly moves back and forth.

Theodore sits in the rocking chair, stares into infinity.

Or maybe, at us...

And then, HUMMING fades in. From...somewhere. From a WOMAN.

An unfamiliar tune, yet, familiar.

Theodore continues to stare...

And then smiles.

He brings a gun up to the bottom of his chin.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END.