

SYMPHOROPHILIA

Written by
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FADE IN.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

A timer BUZZ on a coffee machine. JOHN, 43, conservative, pours a cup. His wife TESSA, 40, natural beauty, comes into the kitchen wrapped in a towel. Her hand wrapped in bandage.

JOHN
Good morning.

TESSA
(flat)
Morning.

JOHN
How's the hand?

TESSA
Fine.

John nods at their dry conversation.

JOHN
I'm meeting your sister today for lunch. Are you doing anything special today?

John pours coffee for her.

TESSA
No. Just stay home, read a book, watch the neighbors, you know, prisoner stuff.

JOHN
Tessa--

TESSA
Have a good day John.

Tessa leaves.

EXT. CAFE - DAY

John sits outside of a small cute cafe. A woman resembling Tessa comes up to him.

WOMAN
Hi John.

The woman is MARIE, 42, professional. She unloads her briefcase and purse into a neighboring chair.

JOHN

Hi Marie.

MARIE

Sorry I'm late, had to finish up some paperwork. How's my sister?

JOHN

Cold. She feels like a prisoner.

MARIE

Don't worry, it'll pass. She just need to be monitored for a while. What did the psychologist say?

JOHN

He says she barely talks during the sessions. She smokes the entire time flicking her lighter on and off until the fuel burns out.

MARIE

Poor Tessa. The car accident must have left her really messed up. What happened to her hand? You said she burned it?

CUT TO:

INT. HOME - DAY

Tessa trudge through the house. She wears only bra and panties. She FLICKS her lighter on and off.

She catches a glimpse of the stove. She freezes. An unreadable look on her face. She tip toes into the

KITCHEN

And stands before the stove. She turns the stove and holds her bandaged hand above the eye as it heats up.

JOHN (V.O.)

Yeah she said she didn't know the stove was on and she placed her hand right on the eye.

Tessa's breathing chops as if she's being seduced. She closes her eyes and glides her free hand down her body into her panties.

INT. CAFE - CONTINUOUS

A waitress places food in front of Marie and John.

MARIE

It was strange, the doctor said she had second-degree burns, as if she let her hand burn.

JOHN

I found that strange as well.

TESSA

You don't think she did that on purpose do you?

JOHN

God no. Marie wouldn't do something like that. She's just going through some things. The medication will help her keep calm until this pass. Though...

MARIE

Though what?

JOHN

Something else I found strange, about the accident. Her therapist told me that when he described the accident to her, she started acting weird, he described it as... aroused.

Tessa's eyes stretch.

MARIE

Aroused?

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Tessa is dressed in a skin tight revealing dress complimented with stiletto heels. She applies lipstick in the mirror. A candle flickers in the reflection. She stops to gaze at it. Hypnotized. She smiles then returns to her lipstick.

INT. GARAGE - DAY

Tessa browse the shelves of the garage. She finds two one-gallon gas cans. She tosses them in the trunk and climbs into the car.

INT. CAFE - DAY

A waitress collects John and Marie's plates.

MARIE

I don't understand, why would Tessa be aroused by a car accident?

JOHN

I don't know. I found his conclusion ridiculous and took her to another therapist. Strangely enough, the new therapist described her acting the same way when she described the accident herself.

MARIE

John, do you know how ridiculous this sounds?

JOHN

I know. I know. I'm not sure what to think. I just want her better.

Marie reach over the table to lay a comforting hand on John's.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Tessa pumps gas slowly into the cans. She plays with her lighter to entertain herself. A station WORKER confronts her.

WORKER

Ma'am, you can't have open flames around the pumps. It's a fire hazard. Very dangerous.

Tessa glare at the woman with cold piercing eyes.

Then she smiles.

TESSA

That's the best part.

She SNAPS off the lighter and shoves it between her pushed up breasts. The worker uncomfortably walks back to the store.

EXT. OLD HOUSE - DAY

Tessa parks in front of an abandoned home. She unloads the cans of gasoline.

INT. OLD HOUSE - DAY

Tessa steps carefully through the destroyed home. Trash and broken glass covers the floor. She finds the

STAIRS

And tiptoes carefully up the weak steps. Adventurous curiosity written on her face. She comes to a door which leads to the

MAIN BEDROOM

Inside, all the windows are broken out and a filthy mattress sit on its frame.

TESSA

Perfect.

INT. PARKING LOT - DAY

John walks Marie to her car.

JOHN

Thanks for meeting me for lunch today.

Marie gushes.

MARIE

You're welcome John. And don't worry. All this will pass soon.

JOHN

I do hope so. Hey look, you should come over for dinner tonight. I'm cooking stuffed fish. It'll be great.

MARIE

I'll bring the white wine.

JOHN

Great. See you there.

INT. HOME - EVENING

John enters the home with bags of groceries.

JOHN
Tessa? Are you home?

No response.

He goes to the restroom door. Soft music plays from within, water running.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Tess, I'm cooking dinner tonight.
Stuffed fish with wine. I invited
Marie over, I hope you don't mind.

No response. He leaves for the kitchen.

EXT. OLD HOUSE - EVENING

Tessa finishes a cigarette then picks up a can. She begins to pour.

INT. BUILDING - NIGHT

Marie boards an elevator with two young MEN. She stands in front and listen to their conversation.

MAN 1
Dude, in psychology we were talking
about paraphilia's. Check this out,
did you know that there's a
paraphilia where the person becomes
sexually aroused by disasters? Like
car accidents, fires and stuff?

MAN 2
No way!

MAN 1
Right?

MAN 2
Dude that's sick.

MAN 1
I know!

Something clicks in Marie. She turns to the men.

MARIE
What is it called?

MAN 1
What?

MARIE
The disease! What is it called?

MAN 1
Symphorophilia.

MARIE
Aroused by disaster right?

MAN 1
Yes.

MARIE
Oh shit.

Marie hammers on the elevator keys.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

Marie calls John but he doesn't answer.

MARIE
Come on John, pick up!

She toss the phone aside.

She flashbacks.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. HOME - DAY

A frightened little GIRL runs to an older WOMAN cooking.

SUPER: 33 YEARS AGO

The girl tugs on the woman's dress.

GIRL
Momma! Momma!

WOMAN
What is it Marie?

Tears spill from the girl's eyes.

MARIE

It's Tessa.

The woman follows Marie into the

LIVING ROOM

Where they find Tessa standing next to a Barbie car that has been lit on fire.

WOMAN

Tessa!

The woman quickly puts out the flames. The plastic car melted a great deal. The woman grabs Tessa.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

What on Earth were you thinking
Tessa? Answer me girl!

Tessa doesn't answer. She simply stares hypnotized at the destroyed toy car.

BACK TO PRESENT

Marie shakes her head.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

John finish cooking. He looks at his watch, a worried look on his face. He goes to the

RESTROOM DOOR

He taps on the door.

JOHN

Honey, you've been in there quite a
while. Dinner is ready and your
sister will be here any minute.

Silence.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Tessa?

He push open the door. Tessa is no where in the bath.

He goes to the

BEDROOM

Tessa is no where in sight.

John runs to the closed

GARAGE

Where he finds her car is gone.

He eyes an empty space on the shelf. His eyes widen.

JOHN

Oh no...

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

John finds missing calls from Marie on his phone. He dials her as he heads for his car.

An SUV pulls up. It's Marie.

MARIE

John! Get in.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Tessa finishes her trail of gasoline. She toss the can aside and lights a match, she drops it onto the gas trail. The flames light and trail along it's path. Tessa goes inside in the

BEDROOM

As the flames get stronger, Tessa removes her shoes and dress. She lie on the mattress and begins to touch and seduce herself.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

John listens to his phone.

JOHN

Damnit, she's not picking up her phone.

MARIE

I've already tried calling a hundred times.

JOHN

Two gas cans are missing from the garage.

Marie looks at John stunned.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Flames engulf the home at rapid speed. Tessa rolls about the bed. She coughs hard from the smoke. She climbs off the bed to leave. Fear fills her eyes. She's trapped.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

Marie and John continue their conversation.

MARIE

Then it's true.

JOHN

What is?

MARIE

Have you heard of Symphorophilia?

JOHN

No. What is it?

MARIE

It's a paraphilia where a person becomes aroused by disasters or dangerous situations.

JOHN

What does this have to do with Tessa?

MARIE

It explains Tessa's behavior after the accident, and burning her hand. She stages disaster for a sexual thrills. Now she has two of your gas cans. She's staging another disaster. We have to find her John.

Marie slams on breaks just as an ambulance races by. Marie and John look at each other thinking the same thing.

Marie follows the ambulance.

EXT. OLD HOUSE - NIGHT

The two follow the ambulance to a house in flames. Firemen scurry about trying to put out the fire.

John recognize Tessa's car parked in front of the house.

JOHN

Stop! That's Tessa's car.

The two hop out of the SUV. John darts through the firemen. A COP holds him back.

COP

Sir, you can't be here, it's too dangerous.

JOHN

That's my wife's car. I need to find her.

COP

We have men inside.

John and Marie watch in horror at the old house collapsing piece by piece.

Two firemen suddenly burst from the flames. One of them carry a body covered in a blanket.

JOHN

Tessa!

The firemen performs CPR on Tessa. She chokes hard back to life. They cover her face with an oxygen mask and load her onto a stretcher.

John and Marie comes to her side.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Tessa, are you alright?

Tessa is weak but she responds with a slow nod.

MARIE

Thank Heavens. We were really worried.

John holds Tessa's hand as the paramedics move her to the ambulance truck.

Tessa looks back at the burning house. Her hardened eyes stare at the flames, hypnotized; just as she was as a child.

Tessa is loaded into the truck. She calls for John. John leans in close to hear her.

Tessa stares at her sister as she whispers to John.

TESSA

I... will... destroy her.

She puts her mask back on in time for her coughing. She turns from John. The doors close and the truck leaves.

John looks over at Marie with a mixed expression she can't read.

He looks back at the truck as it disappears in the dark distance.

FADE OUT.

THE END.