

TOLERANCE

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. OWENS FAMILY HOME - DAY

GWEN OWENS (6) and her brother JAMES (8) run throughout the house. James chases his sister.

JAMES  
I'm going to get you!

Gwen screams playfully. James laughs maniacally.

In the living room, their father, DREW, watches TV. He sips on a tall can of beer. The kids run past and block his view.

DREW  
Settle down!

The kids run into the kitchen. Their mother, CARLA, sits at the table and smokes a cigarette.

The kids do another loop around the house and end up back in the living room with their dad.

James pushes Gwen and she falls into the TV stand. Drew rises from the couch. He watches the TV rattle and nearly tip over.

DREW (CONT'D)  
You little shit!

Drew picks Gwen up off the floor. He throws her onto the couch and she lands on her stomach.

Drew removes his belt and folds it in half.

He raises Gwen's dress and exposes her underwear. He hits Gwen's buttocks with his belt with all his might.

She cries loudly. Drew doesn't stop.

DREW (CONT'D)  
You like that? This is what you get for being a careless, little bitch!

GWEN  
Stop! Please!

DREW  
Have you learned your lesson?

GWEN  
Yes!

Drew grabs hold of Gwen's wrist and pulls her off the couch. She stumbles and collapses onto the floor.

DREW

Go to your room and stay there!

Gwen picks herself up and quickly retreats to her room.

INT. OWENS FAMILY HOME - LATER

Gwen lies in her bed. Her mind races.

She gets out of bed.

She goes and gets her bag of art supplies. She retrieves a black marker and pulls off the lid.

She places the felt tip onto the wallpaper. She hesitates.

Gwen draws a big spiral on the wall.

INT. DENTIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Gwen (13) sits on a chair in the waiting room. The dentist, DR. DAV, enters. He smiles at Gwen and pulls down his mask.

DR. DAV

You must be Gwen. You look nervous.

Gwen nods her head to confirm she is.

DR. DAV (CONT'D)

You've got nothing to worry about.

EXT. DENTIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Gwen's mom, Carla, waits inside her vehicle. Gwen exits the building and enters her mother's car.

CARLA

You survived. Not so bad, right?

GWEN

Right.

CARLA

Tantrums won't be necessary next time. Right?

GWEN

Right.

Carla starts her car's engine and drives out of the lot.

EXT. OWENS FAMILY HOME - DAY

Carla pulls into the driveway. Gwen races out of the car and inside the house.

INT. OWENS FAMILY HOME - DAY

Gwen goes to the kitchen. She opens a drawer and takes out a butter knife. She brings it into her bedroom.

Carla enters the house.

INT. OWENS FAMILY HOME - LATER

Carla stands at the stove and cooks dinner. Gwen walks in.

GWEN  
Mom? I chipped my tooth.

CARLA  
What the fuck, Gwen? Are you trying  
to make us broke?

GWEN  
Sorry.

Carla sighs.

CARLA  
Let me see it.

Gwen walks over and shows her mom her teeth. Her front tooth is missing a large piece from its corner.

CARLA (CONT'D)  
How the Hell did you manage that?

GWEN  
I tripped.

CARLA  
Did you land on your mouth? Jesus,  
Gwen! That looks disgusting!

INT. DENTIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Gwen lies on the dentist's chair and waits. Dr. Dav enters.

DR. DAV  
Gwen, again. I wasn't expecting you  
back here so soon.

GWEN  
I broke my tooth by accident.

DR. DAV  
Let's have a look, then.

Dr. Dav takes a seat next to Gwen.

Gwen opens her mouth wide and points to her front tooth.

DR. DAV (CONT'D)  
You can put down your finger.

Gwen lowers her hand and Dr. Dav examines the damage.

DR. DAV (CONT'D)  
I heard you had fallen. Is that  
what caused this break?

GWEN  
Uh huh.

DR. DAV  
Are you sure?

Gwen closes her mouth and nods her head, yes.

DR. DAV (CONT'D)  
Open your mouth again for me.

Gwen complies. Dr. Dav looks closer at Gwen's tooth.

He gently places his finger on the broken part of the tooth.

Dr. Dav quickly removes his finger from Gwen's mouth and  
watches her facial expressions.

She winces. Her eyelids flutter. She bites her lower lip.

INT. DENTIST'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Dr. Dav cleans his dental supplies. He hears Gwen (17) enter  
the building and walk towards him. He turns to the doorway.

Gwen steps into view, wearing casual clothes and a backpack.

GWEN  
Happy to see me?

DR. DAV  
Always. Go get ready.

INT. DENTIST'S OFFICE - LATER

Dr. Dav has the dentistry room prepped. Gwen walks in, dressed in lingerie. Dr. Dav sees her and smiles.

DR. DAV  
Make yourself comfortable.

Gwen lies down on the dentist's chair.

DR. DAV (CONT'D)  
What is it you're experiencing?

GWEN  
Well, doc, there's a throbbing pain  
in my first molar. Upper-right.

DR. DAV  
Let me have a look. Open wide.

Gwen opens her mouth. Dr. Dav looks inside.

DR. DAV (CONT'D)  
On a scale from one to ten, how  
severe is the pain?

GWEN  
Definitely an eight.

DR. DAV  
It would appear you require another  
root canal. That's your third in  
less than four months. You should  
lay off the sweets, little missy.

GWEN  
Can you fix me?

DR. DAV  
That's what I'm here for.

GWEN  
Oh, doctor! What would I ever do  
without you?

DR. DAV  
Think nothing of it. Lay back while  
I administer the anesthetic.

GWEN  
Less than last time. Please?

DR. DAV  
If you insist.

INT. OWENS FAMILY HOME - NIGHT

Gwen lies asleep in her bed. Her alarm clock on the bedside table reads: 11:59

The clock changes to: 12:00

Next to the clock, a pink cellphone vibrates. Gwen (18) awakens from the sound and answers her phone lying down.

GWEN  
Hello?

It's Dr. Dav calling her.

DR. DAV  
Happy birthday.

GWEN  
Thanks.

DR. DAV  
We should celebrate. I have something special for you in mind.

GWEN  
I'm so tired.

DR. DAV  
My gift for you is unredeemable. If you wimp out, you will have to wait a year to find out what you missed.

Gwen sits up in her bed.

GWEN  
How about a sneak preview?

DR. DAV  
Sorry.

GWEN  
At least give me a hint!

DR. DAV  
Okay. Knock-knock.

GWEN  
Who's there?

DR. DAV  
The void.

GWEN  
The void, who?

DR. DAV  
The void me tonight and I cancel  
our arrangement. Get dressed and  
get your ass over here, ASAP.

Dr. Dav hangs up. Gwen stares at her phone in disbelief.

EXT. DENTIST'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Gwen arrives at the dentist building, dressed warmly. She walks to the front door. Dr. Dav opens the door to greet her.

DR. DAV  
Come in from the cold.

Gwen hurries inside.

DR. DAV (CONT'D)  
Tonight will be a night you never  
forget. I guarantee it.

Dr. Dav closes the door behind Gwen.

INT. TATTOO PARLOUR - DAY

A tattoo artist, MIKEY, stands behind a counter. He reads a magazine and doesn't hear Gwen (21) enter.

Gwen walks over and places a sheet of paper on the counter. She slides it in front of Mikey. He looks over at it.

Hand drawn on the paper is a name, surrounded by an intricate barbed wire design. The paper reads: DR. DAV

Mikey looks up at Gwen.

MIKEY  
Hi!

Gwen smiles at Mikey. Her original teeth are gone. In their place is a full set of gold plated teeth.

FADE OUT.