

THE DREAM

Written by

Sean Elwood

OVER BLACK:

A knock at a door.

RUTH (V.O.)

Come in.

INT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

HANNAH (late 20s) plops down on the sofa, purse in tow. She sets it aside, fixes her skirt, moves her hair out of her face with a breath.

HANNAH

Sorry I'm late. A meeting ran a little longer than I thought it would and I missed my train.

RUTH (40s) sits across from her in a chair, legs crossed, relaxed, with a tablet in hand.

RUTH

No worries. I was just about to reach out.

(beat)

How's work?

Hannah straightens her business jacket, clears her throat.

HANNAH

It's fine. Busy time of year right now. It's kind of stressing me out.

RUTH

Yeah? What's going on?

HANNAH

The usual bull...

(beat)

Actually, that's not why I came to see you.

RUTH

Okay, what is it you want to talk about?

HANNAH

Well, I...

(beat)

I've been seeing you for a long time now. Since I was eighteen.

Ruth nods.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
And you've heard a lot of stuff
from me...

RUTH
Go on.

Hannah sighs. She preps herself.

HANNAH
How much do you know about dreams?
Like, interpreting them?

RUTH
It's quite simple. Tell me the
dream first.

HANNAH
Well, there's this dream that I've
had. A recurring dream. I used to
have it all the time when I was a
kid.

RUTH
When was the last time you had this
dream?

HANNAH
Last night. And every night, for
the past week.

RUTH
And when you were a child?

Hannah seems reluctant to speak. She looks afraid.

HANNAH
When I was seven.

Ruth nods, sets her tablet aside.

RUTH
I see.

HANNAH
Yeah.

RUTH
Do you want to talk about that
again? About your uncle?

Hannah shakes her head.

HANNAH

No. That's not why I'm here.

(beat)

I want...need to talk about this dream. To know what it means.

RUTH

Okay. Tell me the dream.

Hannah prepares herself with a breath.

HANNAH

I'm walking, through the woods. I think I'm walking home, but there's no clear indication of where I'm going. It's dark outside too, like the sun is just...not as bright. Like it's further away...

(beat)

And then I see...a tunnel. It's dark inside, and I don't know what's in there, but I want to find out. I need to find out. Like, I'm searching for something, or someone.

RUTH

Look at the tunnel. What do you see?

HANNAH

There are markings above the tunnel entrance. They're the only marks. Tick marks.

RUTH

How many are there?

HANNAH

Four.

RUTH

Do they ever change in your dream?

HANNAH

No. It's always four.

RUTH

Do you ever go into the tunnel?

HANNAH

Yes.

RUTH
Walk inside.

Hannah closes her eyes.

HANNAH
I'm walking into the tunnel. It's dark. Really dark.

RUTH
Can you see anything?

HANNAH
No, but I can hear something.

RUTH
What do you hear?

HANNAH
I hear...crying...?

RUTH
What kind of crying? A baby's cry?
A woman crying?

HANNAH
Like...wailing...

RUTH
Do you know who it's from?

Hannah frowns, furrows her brows, as she recounts her dream with her eyes still closed.

HANNAH
Wailing...painful crying...the screaming, it...it scared...scares me every time...but, I had to see for myself...

RUTH
See what? What do you see?

HANNAH
(grows upset)
The tunnel, it's changing...less man-made, more natural...stone and dirt...and I hear the screams, they're getting closer...and the tunnel's growing more and more confined...until...I'm on crawling on my hands and knees...and then on my stomach...

Ruth gulps.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

(even more upset)

It seems so real. I can even smell inside the tunnel. Like...decay... and death...and yet I keep going... I have to know...and the screaming, it just gets worse! It never stops!

(beat)

Oh god...I can see them...

RUTH

See who?

HANNAH

(cries)

No...They're there, they're dying. I can see them, down in the pit below...Oh my God...

RUTH

Hannah—

HANNAH

(cries)

They're just out of reach...I'm trying to help them but I can't. I'm trying...And they're...they're suffering...oh my God, M-Mom?! No...My—my parents! My brothers! Oh my God...

(beat)

Oh...Oh no...I see them with... with...!

Her eyes still closed, her jaw drops as she remembers her nightmare. Ruth watches, speechless.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

(beat; whispers)

What...is that?

RUTH

What is what?

HANNAH

It's coming up...from the pit...

(beat)

I...I can't move! I can't... breathe...

RUTH

Open your eyes, Hannah—

HANNAH
It's coming for me—

RUTH
Open your—

HANNAH
It's coming!

RUTH
Hannah—

HANNAH
(shrieks)
It's here!

RUTH
Wake up!

Hannah's eyes snap open as she gasps for air.

Ruth looks at her, rather shocked.

HANNAH
I'm sorry.

RUTH
It's okay. You were falling into a spiral.

Hannah wipes away her tears.

HANNAH
I just...never know what happens next. I always wake up. I never escape, or fight for my life, or anything. I just...wake up...before...

She loses herself in her thoughts.

RUTH
It's only a dream. There's plenty of meaning behind it.

HANNAH
That's what I'm here for, I guess.

RUTH
You said you were stressed from your job? Because it's a busy time of year?

HANNAH

Yeah. There's a lot happening there but...do you think it's just a stress-dream?

RUTH

Our dreams are reflections of our subconscious in our waking lives. Let's start from the beginning...

Hannah nods, regains her composure.

EXT. THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

The door opens and Hannah and Ruth step out. They hug.

RUTH

Get home safe. It's supposed to storm.

HANNAH

Is it? Shoot. I'll take a shortcut through the park, probably.

RUTH

Stay dry, Hannah. I'll see you soon.

HANNAH

Bye, Ruth.

Hannah leaves as Ruth steps back into her office.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Thunder rumbles. It's dark outside for daytime.

Black storm clouds block out the sun, which seems like a spotlight far, far away.

Hannah rushes through the park as the wind picks up.

She catches her breath as it's stolen from the wind, wraps her jacket around herself to keep her warm.

She walks past a tunnel—

Stops. Takes a couple steps back.

A sewer tunnel, so dark inside that it's impossible to see.

The clouds swirl around, grow even darker. The sun has completely disappeared.

She steps toward the mouth of the tunnel.

A chill makes her shiver.

The darkness within seems to call for her.

She looks up at the top of the tunnel opening.

Four tick marks are crudely scribbled on the cement.

Hannah gulps.

She steps away, turns and walks—

A whimper catches her attention.

She looks back at the tunnel.

Another cry from within.

Hannah walks back to the tunnel opening and stares into the darkness within.

Another whine.

Hannah gulps.

She steps forward, into the tunnel—

A bicyclist rushes past her! He rings his bicycle bell, which startles Hannah.

He zooms away.

The wind continues to blow in gusts as the clouds swirl above the whispering trees.

Hannah, heavy breaths, looks back at the tunnel.

INT. TUNNEL - DAY

FROM WITHIN THE TUNNEL

A black border frames Hannah as she stands at the mouth of the tunnel.

She steps away until she's out of sight.

All is silent within this black gullet.

All is still.

Then...

A shadowy figure steps out from the darkness with a sinister sigh.

CUT TO BLACK.