

The Entropy of Love

by
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FADE IN:

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

CLOSE ON a photograph, its edges worn, the black and white image of a girl stares up at us through a multitude of scratches.

We PULL BACK to reveal that the picture is being held by a man, STEVEN PORTER (32) sad, depressed, sitting against the wall of an empty dilapidated room. A single bookcase sits in a corner and a mattress covered with a blanket sits in the middle of the room.

Heroin paraphernalia sits on a small table next to a barred window.

Something looks different about Steven, but we can't put our finger on what it is.

He stares at the picture in his hand.

STEVEN (V.O.)

Skyler Brown. The name alone makes my heart beat faster, my knees weak. I have loved her ever since I met her. Today is October sixteenth two thousand six. I've known her for six thousand two hundred and thirty five days now. I've kept track of every day, I can't help myself. My mind can't let her go. It thinks for me, it's taken me over. I no longer think for myself. My heart, my mind, my lost love have overrun me.

Steven gets up off the floor and walks over to the bookcase where a single notebook sits on the only shelf. He opens it, revealing writings, poems, drawn pictures, journal entries: the ravings of a mad man, or a man madly in love.

STEVEN (V.O.)

Page forty two -- that's where her beautiful picture resides. I keep it marking the page where I wrote about the day when I finally confessed my love for her.

A tear falls from Steven's eye onto the page of writing.

STEVEN (V.O.)

The day that she left me. The day
that I fucking needed her the most.
The day that she told me she never
wanted to see me again.

Steven places the picture on the page in its designated square and carefully shuts the book.

Steven shuffles over to the table and sits down on the only chair. He pulls out a lighter from his pocket, places the heroin on a spoon and holds the lighter under the spoon, melting the toxic powder.

STEVEN (V.O.)

I'm not some crazy drugged out mad man. I do heroin for a reason. When I inject it, for a few minutes of my life I am truly happy because she is with me, right next to me, hugging me, kissing me, making love to me. In my mind she loves me unconditionally and that is better than anything reality has to offer. I rarely choose to live in the real world. I choose to live in the better world.

Steven's movements are like second nature: he fills the syringe, ties off his arm, finds the perfect vein, inserts the needle into his skin, draws out a little blood, injects the drug and --

STEVEN (V.O.)

Hell, for most, the first couple minutes give you the best feeling in the world, but where I'm going, nothing compares.

Steven slowly slumps in his chair, a small grin of ecstasy forms on his lips and his eyes close.

FADE TO WHITE

EXT. SCHOOL - DREAM - STEVEN'S POV

White slowly dissolves into a school yard. Teenagers fill the grass waiting for rides or getting on school buses.

A girl (15) dances in slow motion, her motions fluid and graceful. She's the girl from Steven's picture: SKYLER.

Skyler looks over at us and smiles and then begins to skip towards us, her dress flowing in the breeze. Everything is slow and perfect.

As she skips her motion becomes slower and slower, taking longer and longer for her to get to us, but finally she does.

She stops and smiles.

SKYLER

Hey. You're in my class right?
Wanna study together sometime? My
name's Skyler.

Skyler stands there and smiles, not waiting for an answer, but rather content at just staring at us.

And then the knocking begins.

Knock, knock, knock.

Skyler stands there, unwavering.

Knock.

Knock.

KNOCK.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - EVENING

Steven lies on the floor, his body twitching, his eyes slowly opening.

The knocking is louder now. A MAN yells.

MAN (O.C.)

I know you're in there. Open the
fucking door you god damn junky.

Steven slowly picks himself off the ground and shuffles over to the door, slightly disoriented. Unlocking the door, Steven opens it revealing --

BARRY, a tall, rough looking man who's all business. He's carrying a handful of mail.

BARRY

You better have my money.

STEVEN

Yeah, hold on.

BARRY

And this is the mail you haven't picked up in weeks. The mail guy couldn't shove any more in the box.

Barry tosses the mail on the ground in front of Steven. It's wrapped in a rubber band.

STEVEN

(mumbling)

Thanks.

Steven, still disoriented, plunges his hand into his pants pocket and pulls out a \$100 bill handing it to Barry.

Barry's eyes narrow.

BARRY

You're kidding me, right? You have got to be fucking kidding. That's less than a fourth of the rent. I told you last month that if you didn't have this month's rent your ass would be sleepin' on the curb. You said you'd get a job and get me the money. I believed you. I let you stay here on my own dime and what thanks do I get? Less than a quarter of the rent. You have some fucking nerve.

Steven looks down at his feet, taking the verbal beating.

BARRY

Well, you got anything to say for yourself?

STEVEN

I'll get my things.

Steven turns back into the room but Barry shoves the door open.

BARRY

Not so fast. I'm taking your drugs. I'm not gonna let you O.D.

STEVEN

Fine, take it. Take it all. I don't care. Let me just take my notebook and I'll leave.

BARRY

Notebook?

Barry glances around the room and locates the notebook sitting on the otherwise empty bookshelf

Barry shoves Steven out of the way and quickly runs and takes the book, flipping through its pages.

Steven's eyes grow in horror. He runs over and tries to take the book out of Barry's hands but Barry holds it just out of Steven's reach.

STEVEN

Gimme the fucking thing.

BARRY

Whoa. Not so fast. I think I'll hold onto this as collateral until you can pay me what you owe me. I should've thought of this sooner. Every day I see you carrying this thing like it's your child. Well, if you want it back you're gonna have to pay for it.

Barry flips through the pages stopping at a page with a drawing of Skyler surrounded by writing.

BARRY

(reading from the notebook)

I loved her from the moment I met her. I don't think I'll ever forgive myself for disappointing her like I did. If only I hadn't chosen to...

Barry's voice trails off as he reads the rest of the sentence to himself, a look of confusion filling his face.

BARRY

(in disgust)

Oh my God. Are -- are you -- Serious? You freak!

Barry barely has time to get the word 'freak' out before Steven punches him right in the jaw.

Barry drops the notebook and staggers backwards, rubbing his cheek.

A swift punch to the gut sprawls Barry out on the floor.

The scene begins to move in slow motion as Steven moves toward the table.

STEVEN (V.O.)

I have to kill Barry. I can't live with someone else knowing my secret, knowing just how far I went to win Skyler's heart. If only Skyler could see what I do for her. If only she could see what I put myself through for her.

CLOSE ON TABLE

A box cutter lies on the table next to a group of syringes.

Steven grabs it and slides it off the table.

BACK TO SCENE

Steven, with his back to us, walks toward Barry who is now writhing on the floor in pain.

With the box cutter in hand, Steven kneels down next to Barry.

STEVEN (V.O.)

If only she could see how much I love her.

As Steven slices into Barry's neck, we --

CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Steven sits on the apartment steps leading down to the sidewalk. He's wearing a backpack. The neighborhood is rough, a typical city street.

Steven looks down at the mail in his hands and begins to go through it.

STEVEN (V.O.)

I can never come back here. It'll only be a few hours until police find Barry's body and it'll be obvious who sliced him open. I have to get as far away as possible.

Steven stops at an envelope and begins to tear it open, removing a neatly folded letter and a photograph.

STEVEN (V.O.)

For the past three years I've lived without a phone or a computer so I've relied on writing letters to stay in contact with people. Felix, a good friend of mine from high school, works for a private investigator. Two months ago I wrote him a letter asking him to find out where Skyler's living.

Steven looks at the photo.

CLOSE ON PHOTO

The picture is a grainy surveillance photo of Skyler pushing a stroller and walking with her husband.

BACK TO SCENE

Steven sets the photo down on the concrete step and unfolds the letter, beginning to read it.

STEVEN (V.O.)

Skyler's married but I know she's not happy. I know I'm the only one who can truly love her the way she deserves.

Steven looks closely at the letter.

STEVEN

Washington DC? Huh.

Steven neatly folds the letter back up and places it, along with the picture, back into the envelope.

STEVEN (V.O.)

I have to get to Washington DC.
It's far enough away from New York
City to give Skyler and I a little
time to, well --

(beat)

Catch up on things.

Steven gets up and walks quickly down the sidewalk, turns a corner, and disappears out of sight.

EXT. CONVIENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

Steven walks out of the store, a newspaper under his arm and a hotdog in his hand. He walks over to a pay phone, which he leans against and begins to eat the hot dog.

STEVEN (V.O.)

There's only one way that I'm going
to be able to get to Skyler's house
and that's by taking someone's car
since I don't have my own. I've
seen too many people over the years
get out of their cars and run into
convenience stores, leaving their
keys in the ignition with the car
still running.

Steven finishes the hot dog, throws the wrapper away and opens up the newspaper to read and wait.

Moments later, a BLACK MAN (25), dressed like a gangster and talking on his cell phone, pulls into the parking lot in an old Buick.

He gets out of the car and glances over at Steven who does all he can to hide his face behind the paper..

BLACK MAN

(into the cell phone)

Yeah, I'm pickin' up the beer that
yo' ass forgot.

The man walks into the store and heads for the refrigerated section in the back.

Steven tosses the paper into the trash and dashes for the Buick.

He climbs in and throws the car into reverse as the man, still on his cell phone, runs out of the store towards the car.

Steven switches the car into drive and squeals the tires out of the parking lot as the black guy throws his hands up in disbelief.

BLACK MAN
(into the phone)
You're not gonna believe this.
Some mother fuckin' cracker just
stole my ride!

He runs back into the store as the Buick disappears into traffic.

EXT. REST STOP - NIGHT

The Buick sits alone by a group of trees. The trunk is open and Steven is in the back seat looking for something.

STEVEN (V.O.)
Apparently the guy who's car I
stole is a drug dealer. So far
I've found a pistol, five hundred
rounds and a half pound of
marijuana. I threw the mary jane
into the woods because I don't use
that stuff, but you never know when
the gun might come in handy. What
I'm really looking for, though, is
a screwdriver.

Steven shoves his hand under the driver's seat and pulls out a screwdriver.

STEVEN
Jackpot!

Steven closes the car door and the trunk and walks to the front of the car and unscrews the license plate. He goes to the rear of the car and does the same.

Carrying the plates, he moves to a car sitting on the other side of the parking lot.

He looks in the windows and sees a sleeping man in the driver's seat.

Steven goes to the front of the car, quietly takes off the plate and replaces it with the Buick's tag. He goes to the back and switches out the tag there as well.

INT. BUICK - NIGHT

Steven holds a small spoon filled with heroin over a lighter.

STEVEN (V.O.)

I have to rest, but I can't rest
without my love. I can't believe
that tomorrow I'm going to finally
see her again, but right now she's
not here -- not yet anyway.

Steven fills the syringe, ties off his arm and injects the heroin.

Steven's head falls forward as we --

FADE TO WHITE

INT. WHITE ROOM - DREAM - STEVEN'S POV

Skyler dances in slow motion, a floral pattern decorates her dress. We can hear her voice but her mouth doesn't move.

SKYLER

I love you Steven. I love you so
much. We'll be together forever.
I know we will. We're meant to be
together. I love you Steven. I
love you so much. We'll be
together forever --

And suddenly Skyler is no longer dancing but she's standing right in front of us and she bends down slowly, closing her eyes, ready to kiss, her voice still repeating those sweet words as we --

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. INTERSTATE 95 - DAWN - CLOSE ON REAR LICENSE PLATE

The rear license plate is from Maine - "3367MVY"

The Buick slowly pulls away from us and melts in with the rest of the traffic driving down 95.

STEVEN (V.O.)

I'm determined to get to her house
early in the day, but not too
early. I want to make sure her
husband has left for work.

EXT. SKYLER'S HOUSE - MORNING

The house is nice, a typical upper middle class suburban home. The yard is neat and well kept.

A black BMW backs out of the driveway. The man who we recognize as Skyler's husband is driving. He's wearing a business suit.

As he nears the end of the street, Steven's Buick turns the corner.

Steven pulls into the driveway of Skyler's house as the BMW turns the corner and drives out of sight.

STEVEN (V.O.)

This is it. This is the moment that I've been waiting so many years for. I can't wait to tell her about how much I love her, to show her my notebook, to show her how much I care and need her.

Steven gets out of the car, a small bouquet of roses and his notebook in his hand. He fixes his hair in the side mirror and then walks towards the front door, hiding the flowers and notebook behind his back.

Steven takes a deep breath and rings the door bell.

There's a few second pause and then we hear Skyler's voice.

SKYLER (O.S.)

What did you forget this time, honey?

The door unlocks and opens revealing Skyler, her hair still wet from showering.

She sees Steven and looks surprised.

SKYLER

Can I help you?

Steven's face falls.

STEVEN

You don't know who I am? I certainly haven't forgotten you. I haven't stopped thinking about you, Skyler, since the last time I saw you.

Steven brings the flowers from behind his back and holds them out to Skyler.

STEVEN

These are for you. We belong together, Skyler. You never gave us a chance. Now it's time.

Skyler backs up, a look of horror replacing the surprised look.

SKYLER

Are you fucking serious? You -- it -- what the hell?
(beat)
Brianna?

Yes, that's right, Steven is actually Brianna, a transgender. He's a she.

We wait a beat for that revelation to sink in.

Steven/Brianna's eyes begin to well up with tears.

STEVEN

I love you Skyler. I always have. I can't live without you.

In the background a baby begins to cry.

SKYLER

I have a baby, a family, Brianna. I don't need you around here fucking up my life like you fucked up yours. Get the hell off my property before I call the cops.

Skyler begins to shut the door.

Steven reaches under his shirt and into the waist of his pants, pulling out the pistol he found in the Buick.

STEVEN

I didn't want to do this...

Steven's voice trails off as he slams the door open, knocking Skyler down onto the floor.

SKYLER

Get the fuck out of my house you freak!

Steven looks down at Skyler from above, his eyes full of anger.

STEVEN
(screaming)
This should've been our house!

Steven's reaches back and pistol whips Skyler, knocking her out.

The baby is screaming louder then ever now as we --

CUT TO:

INT. SKYLER'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Skyler slowly wakes up with a large knot on her head, bound to a kitchen chair, her arms tied down to the armrests.

She's been dressed in a floral print dress almost identical to the one that was in Steven's dream.

Steven stands on the other side of the room holding Skyler's baby and singing a quiet lullaby. Steven's eyes are dark and red from crying.

Steven looks up to see Skyler awakening.

STEVEN (V.O.)
She looks so beautiful waking up.
I can just imagine what it's like
to wake up next to her in the
morning, her hair flowing over her
pillow. Being with her now, I feel
so at peace.
(beat)
But I won't let her reject me
again.

Skyler sees Steven holding her baby and panics, pulling at the ropes that hold her down.

SKYLER
Let go of her, I'll do anything,
just don't hurt my baby.

Steven chuckles.

STEVEN
No one's hurting your baby,
sweetie.

When Steven says 'sweetie,' Skyler cringes. Steven notices it.

STEVEN

What, you don't like sweetie? How about darling? Honey?

Skyler begins to cry.

SKYLER

Let me go. Why are you doing this to me? I don't deserve this.

Steven sets the baby down in its carrier and walks over to Skyler, holding the pistol at his side.

STEVEN

Deserve this? Deserve this? Let me tell you something. I don't deserve what you've put me through. I loved you, I wanted to be with you forever and then you fucking rejected me the day of my surgery. The day that I was going to change the one thing that was keeping us apart.

SKYLER

(screaming and crying)

I don't love you, Brianna, I never have. I haven't even thought about you since that day. I pushed you out of my memory. I had almost forgotten about you...

STEVEN

But you couldn't. You knew there was something there. We had something Skyler, you know that.

SKYLER

You're right, we did. It was called a friendship and you decided to ruin that when you came to the conclusion you had to turn into a guy for me.

Steven leans in, his face red in anger.

STEVEN

Don't ever say I ruined it.

Steven's face softens a bit when he looks into Skyler's eyes.

STEVEN

God Skyler, you're so beautiful. I forgot how perfect you are.

Steven slides the tip of the pistol over Skyler's face, who recoils in disgust.

SKYLER

Get the fuck away from me.

Tears flow down Steven's cheeks. He begins to yell at Skyler, flailing the gun around carelessly.

STEVEN

Why do you keep rejecting me?
What's wrong with me? I've done everything I can to become the person that you want. I'm the best person for you. I'll treat you better than anyone's ever treated...

BANG!

The sound surprises Steven. He looks around to see where it came from but then realizes it came from his pistol.

The baby, who has so far slept through all the yelling, begins to cry.

Skyler lets out a scream of pain. A blood spot on her chest begins to grow, the red in stark contrast with the spring blues and pinks of her dress.

Skyler's breathing becomes labored and she spits up blood.

Steven stands still and calm. He smiles.

STEVEN (V.O.)

I shot her. I shot Skyler. The only girl I have ever loved. I'll never know whether I did it subconsciously or just by accident, but I did it none the less. And now here she is dying in front of me, and I'm strangely calm. I think it's because I know that I will be the last person that she will ever see and that makes me happy.

Skyler slowly lets out her last breath of air, and her head drops to the side.

Skyler's eyes stare blankly at a smiling Steven.

INT. SKYLER'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - 20 MINUTES LATER

Steven sits next to Skyler's body, which is still tied up in the chair. A large pool of blood has formed on the floor under Skyler. Steven holds the notebook in his hands. He opens it to the last page, the only blank page in the entire book.

Steven leans over and kisses Skyler on the cheek and then dips his finger into the blood on her chest. With his bloody finger he draws a heart on the empty page. He then places the open notebook on Skyler's lap.

STEVEN (V.O.)

With that heart, the last chapter
of my notebook, and my life, is
finally complete.

Steven hold up three syringes, each filled with a large dose of heroin. He ties off his right arm with a belt and injects himself with all three syringes one at a time.

Steven loosens the belt around his arm, letting the heroin move through his body.

He begins to go limp as a smile appears on his lips.

The baby begins to whimper in the background.

FADE TO WHITE

INT. WHITE ROOM - DREAM - STEVEN'S POV

Skyler dances in the floral print dress, her motion slow and fluid.

STEVEN (V.O.)

For most, being high is the best
feeling in the world --
(long beat)
-- but where I'm going, nothing
compares.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END