

THE NOTE

Written by

Henry Tjernlund

724-495-0352
henry.tjernlund@gmail.com

INT. CYAN'S APPARTMENT - MAIN ROOM - DAY

The apartment is sparse. A television sits on the floor, it's cord draped over it's dark screen, a piece of paper is taped to it which has a cartoon dead face (X's for eyes and a tongue hanging out of a frown.

A laptop occupies the corner of the lone desk but it too has a dead face note. Papers and bills piled on top of it.

A metal fork sticks out from a Chinese takeout carton of plain white rice. Chop sticks, snapped in half, lay beside it.

Cyan Sheppard (20s), a frumpily-dressed undernourished waif sits at her desk surrounded by crumpled balls of paper.

She SNIFFLES. Her eyes are red and wet.

A pen SCRATCHES on paper.

Mixed with the crumples of paper is an open letter, which begins

INSERT - DEAR MS. SHEPPARD. WE ARE SORRY TO INFORM YOU THAT YOUR WORK IS NOT WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR AT THIS TIME.

Another letter is partly visible which a portion reads

INSERT - YOUR STORY DOES NOT FIT OUR NEEDS AT THIS TIME. GOOD LUCK IN YOUR FUTURE ENDEAVOR.

Putting down the pen, Cyan picks up the sheet of paper. Her lips move as she silently reads what she's written.

She wrinkles her nose, crumples the paper and tosses it into a pile.

The crumpled paper rolls across a list.

INSERT

--SLIT WRIST :-P (crossed out)

--JUMP FROM ROOF :-/ (crossed out)

--HANGING MAKES A STATEMENT! :-) (circled)

--OVERDOSE PEACEFUL & PAINLESS. :-) (circled)

END INSERT

She begins again on a new sheet of paper.

CYAN (V.O.)

To whom it may concern, or may not.

As i am merely taking up space in

this world and do not matter.

(MORE)

CYAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

i have optioned to check out,
luggage not included. Thus without
further ado about nothingness, i
pen "the end."

She picks up the sheet of paper, looking it over again and places it conspicuously at the corner of the desk.

CYAN

(to herself)

It'd be ironic if that actually got
published. My first... and last.

CYAN'S KITCHENETTE

With an empty glass in hand Cyan opens the fridge. It's nearly empty except for one bottle of wine and several of soft drink.

She opens the wine. only a splash pours into the glass. Cyan scowls. The bottle goes in the trash. A bottle of dark cola adds a small splash; same with a lemony drink. The trash is full and the fridge is empty. She frowns into the mixed drink.

On a drying towel beside the sink is one bowl, one plate, one spoon, and one butter knife.

From a nearly empty cabinet she takes out a bottle of pills and SHAKES it. The RATTLE tells of plenty of pills inside.

She pours all the pills into the glass of drink. It FIZZES.

Raising the glass to her mouth, she pauses, then lowers it.

She tries again but the same happens.

CYAN

(to herself)

Girl, what are you doing?

In one quick motion she downs it all. *Wow, I really did it.* She licks her lips. EW! She BELCHES. Rinsing the glass she restores it to it's place on the drying towel.

She looks at a wall clock and heads back to the main room.

CYAN (CONT'D)

(to herself)

No stopping now.

MAIN ROOM

Cyan goes to her writing desk. From a drawer she takes out a pair of handcuffs with keys. She's about to snap one cuff onto her wrist.

CYAN
(to herself)
Na, shows a lack of resolve.

She tosses the handcuffs and keys onto the desk.

Cyan walks toward the open bedroom where above a noose waits, it's rope goes over a ceiling pipe, then ties off to the door knob with no rope left over.

She stops and puts a finger up. *Oh yeah.*

CYAN (CONT'D)
You don't want to be all icky when
they find you.

Going to the door she unlatches the lock and opens the door a crack.

She returns to the bedroom.

BEDROOM

Cyan moves a chair under the noose. She steps up. The top of her head barely touches the bottom of the noose.

CYAN
Shoot.

She thinks for a moment, nods to herself then climbs down.

A MOMENT LATER

THUD. A 6-inch thick library dictionary lands on the chair. Then a hardback Physician's Desk Reference with several bookmarks sticking out of it. Finally a copy of Final Exit tops it off.

Looking through her closet she takes out a pair of high heeled platform boots.

CYAN
Finally a fitting use for these.

Zippping up the boots she climbs on the chair again.

As she stands she wobbles.

CYAN (CONT'D)

Whoa.

Carefully balancing, she get the bottom of the noose under her chin, but the knot gets stuck at the top of her head. She emits a frustrated SIGH.

FOOTSTEPS RUN down the apartment building hallway.

Outside in the main room the apartment door OPENS, CLOSES, and is LATCHED.

MAIN ROOM

Cyan, still in her boots, emerges from her bedroom.

SAM GREEN (20s) presses his ear against the door, listening. An orange jumpsuit leaks out from under the wrist and ankles of clothes that are too small for him.

Seeing her he's startled. He puts his finger to his lips, SHHH.

She cocks her head at him like a confused dog.

Outside in the hallway running FOOTSTEPS pass near by.

COP #1 (O.S.)

I don't see him.

COP #2 (O.S.)

He probably went up. They always go up to the roof. Don't know why.

The FOOTSTEPS fade into the distance.

SAM

I'm not going to hurt you.

She just stares.

SAM (CONT'D)

Yeah, I'm that guy on the news.

Cyan shakes her head and shrugs.

SAM (CONT'D)

The one they arrested for the murder, 'cept I didn't do it.

Her eyes dart about in confusion.

He looks around the main room. No working TV.

SAM (CONT'D)
Haven't seen the news, have you?

She shakes her head "no."

He takes a step toward her. She backs away toward her desk.

He's concentrating on her so much that he doesn't see the noose and chair through the doorway into the bedroom.

SAM (CONT'D)
I just need to stay for a little
bit until things cool down.

Opening her mouth to say something, she changes her mind.

He walks forward, she backs into her chair. FLOP.

SAM (CONT'D)
It'll be just for a little while.

He looks around her desk.

SAM (CONT'D)
A writer, eh?

CYAN
Yeah... sorta.

SAM
Written anything good?

She STAMMERS.

SAM (CONT'D)
Sorry, that didn't come out right.

Sam plucks the handcuffs from her desk.

SAM (CONT'D)
These yours?

CYAN
No.

SAM
They belong to a boyfriend or...
girlfriend maybe?

He steps backward to peek into the bedroom.

CYAN
No, and NO.

Sam sees the noose and chair.

Then seeing the note he snatches it off the table.

CYAN (CONT'D)
Hey. that's mine.

Sam reads the note silently. He spots the pill bottle, picks it up and gives it a shake. Empty.

He looks at her with shock. She avoids eye contact.

CYAN'S KITCHENETTE

Sam wrestles Cyan to the sink. Her hands are cuffed together,
He pins her hips to the sink with his own pelvis.

With one hand he forces her mouth open and tries to stick his finger down her throat.

She bites him.

SAM
OW!

He tries again. She bites him again.

SAM (CONT'D)
OW! Will you stop biting me?

CYAN
Stop sticking your fingers in me.

Sam grabs the lone spoon from the drying towel.

He manages to force her mouth open again sticking the spoon down her throat.

She WRETCHES.

SPLAT. A glob of stomach mucus with yet-to-dissolved pills lands in the sink.

Sam flushes them down the drain.

CYAN (CONT'D)
(coughing)
Hey, those are mine.

SAM
Hey, I'm saving your life.

CYAN
Why, so you can kill me in your own
sick demented way?

Sam glares at her.

SAM
Yeah, maybe I will. Very demented.

She lifts her knee and stomps her high heel down into his
foot.

Sam YELPS.

MAIN ROOM

Cyan fumes in her chair several feet away from her desk. One
wrist is cuffed to a steel pipe running to a heating
radiator.

Sam limps back and forth favoring the foot she stomped. His
fingers bleed.

CYAN
So what're ya going to do to me
now? Pervert.

SAM
Nothing, I'm not going to hurt you.

CYAN
That's what all killers say.

SAM
Really? How many have you met?

Cyan stays silent.

SAM (CONT'D)
Yeah, just as I thought.

CYAN
I've written one or two.

SAM
Which is it, one or two?

Cyan grits her teeth.

CYAN

One.

SAM

So that makes you an expert.

CYAN

Yeah, it does. And he was a real bad ass. Muscles and tattoos galore. Not like... you.

Sam shakes the key at her.

SAM

You're on thin ice, girly.

CYAN

Girly? Thin ice? When are you from?

Sam examines his bleeding fingers.

SAM

I'd better clean this out before I get writer rabies, or something.

Cyan sticks her tongue at him as he heads to the bathroom.

Water RUNS in the bathroom sink.

SAM (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I don't understand why you'd want to do something like that. You need to stay, you know, grounded... like me.

CYAN

(to herself)

Yeah right, grounded. Thanks for the advice... MOM.

Cyan tugs on the metal handcuffs attaching her to the metal pipe.

CYAN (CONT'D)

(to herself)

Grounded...

She looks at the electrical wall socket several feet the opposite direction.

CYAN (CONT'D)

Yeah, grounded...

That's it! Her attention snaps to her desk and the carton of white rice from which her metal fork sticks out.

Water SPLASHES in the bathroom.

She plucks the fork from the Chinese food container.

She reaches the opposite direction toward the electrical outlet. Half a foot too short. She strains against the cuffs. Her high heels digging into a loose rug which folds into a pile. She's still inches away.

The water from the bathroom stops.

She begins working the fork to the tips of her fingers. Almost there.

SAM

What are you doing?

Sam stands there, fingers bandaged, his hands partly dry with a towel.

Cyan freezes, eyes wide. A cat caught in the act. She looks his direction only with her eyes.

Sam drops the towel and rushes her.

She jabs him with the fork multiple times in quick succession.

SAM (CONT'D)

Ow, ow, OW, jeeze!

He retreats.

With a sudden surge of effort she stretches with all her might to get the fork in the socket. It's going in.

Sam leaps and grabs her hand. His hand is still wet and slips down her wrist, pulls the fork from her fingers, it's tongs go deep into the socket. ZAP!

Sam GRUNTS as electricity surges through his body. The lights flicker and dim.

CYAN

Hey! That's my--

Sam convulses once and falls to the floor. His hand is off the fork, which is still stuck, SPARKING, from the outlet. The lights come back up.

Cyan looks at his still body, and reaches for the sizzling fork. Her fingers are about to touch it. She looks at Sam's still body again.

CYAN (CONT'D)

Hey.

He's motionless.

CYAN (CONT'D)

Hey!

She nudges him with her boot heel. No response.

She looks at the fork, then to Sam, then fork, then Sam.

Exhaling a SIGH she rolls her eyes.

She strains against the handcuffs as she can just reach his shirt pocket. Nothing there.

Grabbing his collar she pulls him to her. Her hand goes into one pants pocket and feels around.

What's that? A look of confusion crosses her face as she feels around some more. *Oh, that's what that is.*

Quickly She checks his other pocket. Her hand emerges with the handcuff keys. She frees herself.

A MOMENT LATER

Cyan kneels beside Sam.

CYAN

A - B - C. A - Airway.

She tilts Sam's head back.

CYAN (CONT'D)

B - Breathing.

She listens for breathing. Nothing. She blows several breaths into him.

CYAN (CONT'D)

C - Circulation.

She feels for a pulse in his neck. Not there. She properly measures along his sternum and begins CPR compressions.

DISSOLVE TO

PARAMEDIC #1 Performs CPR compressions.

Cyan watches. COP #3 stands at her side.

PARAMEDIC #2 smears electrical gel on defibrillation paddles, and presses them to Sam's chest as Paramedic #1 leans out of the way.

The tone from the monitor is ERRATIC. The dot on the screen spikes chaotically.

PARAMEDIC #2
V-Fib... CLEAR!

ZAP! Sam's body shudders.

Paramedic #2 watches the monitor.

BEEP, BEEP, BEEP. The dot traces a steady heart pattern.

PARAMEDIC #2 (CONT'D)
Conversion... we got sinus rhythm.

PARAMEDIC #1
Let's get him loaded.

A MINUTE LATER

The Paramedics wheel Sam out the door on their cot.

Cyan stands beside Cop #3.

CYAN
Ironical.

COP #3
What is?

CYAN
That they'll probably just give him
the electric chair anyway.

COP #3
You haven't been following the
news, have you?

CYAN
That he's an escaped murderer?

COP#3

No. They just caught the real
murderer.

CYAN

So he's innocent? He'll go free?

She perks up.

COP#3

Not exactly. He did escape custody
which is still a felony.

CYAN

(sad)

Oh.

COP

Judge will probably go easy on him.

Her sadness wanes.

CYAN

(guarded happiness)

Oh, that's not so bad.

COP #3

Good for him that you saved his
life.

The cop turns toward the door.

COP #3 (CONT'D)

Excuse me but I have to go ride
with the medics.

Now alone, realization dawns on Cyan. Grinning she bristles
her shoulders in happiness.

Bouncing to her desk, she picks up the suicide note and tears
it to pieces.

Sitting, she clears some space. She thinks, then writes.

CYAN (V.O.)

The Artist and the Escapee, by Cyan
Sheppard. The odor of half cured
linseed oil on cotton canvas hung
in the air...

END