

To Be

by

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FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL - PRIVATE ROOM - NIGHT

Medical equipment silently monitors body functions.

A woman in her twenties lies in the bed. Bald, thin and pale with sunken eyes. This is SAMANTHA.

She reaches out to pick up one of several invoices on the bedside table.

The door opens. CAROLINE enters - in her forties and a smart business suit. She's a little too fond of make-up and classy jewellery.

She steps slowly to the bed. Takes Samantha's hand.

The invoice falls to the floor.

CAROLINE

Don't worry. I'll take care of it,
Sam. You'll be okay. You will be
okay.

EXT. PARK - DAY

A bearded old man sits on a bench. This is JOSEPH. His hair is long, grey and straggly.

He adjusts his trilby to cover his spectacled eyes. Delves into a pocket of his long coat. Produces a brown paper bag.

Before him is a large duck pond. A bread crust lands on the water. Ducks zoom towards it.

Joseph's eyes scan his surroundings - deserted.

He throws more scraps into the pond. Quacks abound. Checks his watch.

Caroline approaches the bench. She wears a white headscarf and a black winter coat.

She peers over large sunglasses at Joseph.

Nods to him as she passes. He studies a duck feeding.

She stops at the other end of the bench. His gaze stays on the feasting ducks. She sits. He throws a handful of scraps towards the pond. They land with small plops.

Caroline glances at him. She puts a hand to her mouth as she coughs. Joseph peers into the paper bag.

She coughs again, with a little more force.

JOSEPH

Frog?

Caroline removes her sunglasses to eye him. He keeps watching the water.

She looks around - only them and the ducks to see.

JOSEPH

In your throat, a frog.

CAROLINE

Oh, I see now. No.

Joseph screws up the bag. Pockets it.

CAROLINE

I'm Caroline.

JOSEPH

I know who you are.

CAROLINE

You do?

He sniffs. His head stays still as his eyes search the landscape.

JOSEPH

You come alone today, Mrs. Singer?

Her mouth opens a little.

CAROLINE

Yes. Yes I did.

JOSEPH

Good. Follow me please.

He gets up slowly. Steps away with his hands behind his back. Caroline follows him.

EXT. LEAFY PATH - MINUTES LATER

Joseph moves quick for an old man - Caroline struggles to keep up.

High heels clop on concrete.

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

(tinny)

Roger that. Mark one's heading
north on the main path to you...
now.

P.O.V.: TELESCOPIC VIEW OF PATH

Zooming in on Joseph from an elevated rear position. Caroline
clops along close behind.

Joseph moves along quicker now, beneath trees - out of view.

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)

Lost him. She's out too.

EXT. LEAFY PATH

Joseph turns to grip Caroline's arm. Drags her through a
small gap in the fence.

CAROLINE

What are you doing?

WOODLAND

He moves fast. Pulls her through bushes and trees. Acts like
he knows exactly where he's going.

CAROLINE

You're hurting me!

They stop. He brings his face right up to hers. Glares into
her eyes. She cowers back.

JOSEPH

You want to do this? Or not?

CAROLINE

Well yes but...

JOSEPH

But shit. Shut the fuck up and come
with me. Now.

He pushes her on through the bushes.

MALE VOICE (V.O.)
Anyone got an eyeball?

A squirrel above them jumps with grace along a branch.

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)
Not here, nada.

YOUNG MALE VOICE (V.O.)
Negative. Nothing here either.

MALE VOICE (V.O.)
Keep looking.

The squirrel stops. It scratches an itch.

INT. WHITE VAN - PARKED - LATER

Engine running. Traffic whizzes past.

GABRIEL sits in the driver's seat. Late forties, tall and lean, buzz cut, cold eyes. Watches the passenger side mirror stoically.

EXT. PARK ROAD

The white van sits beside a low wall. Thick foliage covers the embankment above it.

Tinted glass shields the van's occupant.

Caroline emerges from the bushes above the wall. Joseph grips her arm as he pushes her out.

INT. VAN

Gabriel still stares in the mirror. Sees Joseph open the van's side door.

Joseph pushes Caroline into the van. Slides the door shut then gets in beside Gabriel.

The van moves off.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

The white van pulls off a dusty road. It heads to a large rising roller door.

INT. WAREHOUSE - LOADING BAY - MOMENTS LATER

The van stops in the centre. Its engine dies. The roller door clatters to a close.

Joseph and Gabriel exit the van.

They stroll towards EDITH, a small old woman in a cardigan sitting behind a desk in a corner.

Her eyes stay firmly on the newspaper in front of her. The date reads "Wednesday, 23rd April 2014."

EDITH

Success?

JOSEPH

Naturally. Any good tips in there?

Her lips purse.

EDITH

Any problems?

JOSEPH

Just the usual. These felt a bit more pro though.

EDITH

Then time to move on, methinks.

Gabriel nods. Joseph shrugs. Edith finally looks up.

EDITH

Unanimous then. Get her out, get it done.

Gabriel follows Edith out through a doorway. Joseph walks nimbly back to the van. Opens it.

Caroline sits awkwardly on a bench within. Blinks at the light, shields her eyes.

Joseph helps her out. Leads her back to the desk.

CAROLINE

Where are we?

JOSEPH

Here. Sit.

He sits opposite, stares down at the newspaper. Caroline straightens her headscarf.

CAROLINE
Was all that absolutely necessary?

JOSEPH
Absolutely.

He turns the page.

Caroline's focus moves to a large mirror in front of her.

INT. VIEWING ROOM

Edith and Gabriel look back through the one way mirror.

EDITH
She's clean. Motivation checks out.
Nervous enough.

GABRIEL
Go or no?

She scratches her nose.

EDITH
What do you think?

He shrugs.

EDITH
They're close. A lot closer than
usual. My instincts tell me no.

Edith whispers into Gabriel's ear. He leaves.

LOADING BAY

Joseph folds the newspaper then stares at Caroline.

JOSEPH
Your first payment has cleared. All
well and good. Only question left
is when.

Caroline crosses her legs. She grips her fingers.

CAROLINE
Before Sunday. It must be before
then. It has to be violent, not
(MORE)

CAROLINE (CONT'D)
something that could be viewed as
natural, or accidental.
Otherwise...

JOSEPH
None of that's a problem. I can't
tell you when, or how exactly. You
understand?

She nods weakly. Squeezes her fingers.

CAROLINE
What if I change my mind?

He fondles his beard.

JOSEPH
Now would be the time. After this,
we won't meet again.

Her head drops as tears fill her eyes. Joseph looks away as
her breathing increases.

JOSEPH
What would you like to do Mrs.
Singer? Like I said...

She pulls a silk handkerchief from her bag. Dries her eyes
carefully as she nods.

Joseph takes a pen and pad from a desk drawer. He writes
"Thursday 24th".

JOSEPH
Good. Let's start with tomorrow.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

The white van pulls up near the entrance.

Caroline gets out of the passenger side. She leans back in.

CAROLINE
Thank you.

JOSEPH (O.S.)
You do have cash for a ticket?

She nods, forces a weak smile as she closes the door. The van
drives away. She watches it.

INT. VAN - MOVING - LATER

The van rolls to a stop at a red light.

Joseph looks at his reflection in the side window. He removes his spectacles, places them on the dash.

He lifts his trilby. His long grey hair moves away with it to reveal a shiny bald head.

Grips his sideburns and pulls. The beard peels away. Digs his fingers in below his eyes. Latex unfurls.

INT. HOSPITAL - PRIVATE ROOM - DAY

SUPER: Thursday

Caroline stands at the bedside. Beside her is PAUL SINGER, a smartly dressed tall man in his sixties.

They look down at the sleeping Samantha in the bed. Concern fills their faces.

Tears in their eyes. Caroline caresses Samantha's cheek.

She stops when she hears a commotion in the corridor. Turns to the door in a panic. It opens.

A young chubby NURSE enters - as calm as a light breeze.

NURSE

Sorry, just a little accident with
the trolley and the porter. Poor
lad needs help. A lot. Sorry...

She leaves. Caroline exhales. Paul stares at her with puzzlement.

EXT. CITY CENTRE - CROSSROADS - DAY

SUPER: Friday

On one corner is a huge old bank. Fast food restaurants occupy the other three.

A convertible red sports car pulls up at traffic lights. Caroline drives. Beside her is Paul - studying his iPhone.

A black van with tinted windows pulls up to park opposite them. Its passenger window winds down two inches.

GUNSHOTS. Two masked raiders rush out of the bank. They fire shots into the air. One aims at the windows of a parked car near Caroline. Its windows implode.

Pedestrians panic. Some flee. Others drop to the ground.

A gun barrel appears in the open window of the black van.

P.O.V.: TELESCOPIC VIEW OF RED CAR FROM BLACK VAN

Cross hairs fall between Paul's eyes. A silenced SHOT.

INT. RED CAR

Paul's head jerks back. Another shot - hits him in the chest.

Caroline stares agape at Paul. He's motionless. Blood trickles from his nostrils. For a moment there's silence.

She closes her eyes. Clasps her hands together - as if in prayer.

P.O.V.: TELESCOPIC VIEW OF RED CAR

The cross hairs fall between Caroline's eyes.

CAROLINE
May the Lord have mercy on...

A silenced SHOT.

FADE OUT