

Deer Lights

by

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EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

A man buries pills in the ground. He hears BRANCHES BREAK and an ANIMAL noise. The man takes off running through the woods wearing nothing but thin brown leather straps around his waist.

A woman wearing the head of a deer appears in front of him. She wears only tattered white linens and her body is covered in cuts. He falls to his knees. The man reaches out his hand. The woman reaches out hers. A bright white light barrels down on them as they turn to face it. Brighter and brighter the white light grows.

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

The sound of two children FIGHTING can be heard in the distance as white light fades. CHARLIE (30) a long haired young man in a t-shirt and boxers/briefs lays facing away from LILY (30) a short blonde who is wearing yoga pants and a t-shirt in their bed--eyes open staring up at the ceiling.

Two young children in PAJAMAS come storming into the room SCREAMING and YELLING. Lily grabs the youngest, WILL (6) who is blonde haired & blue eyed, and pulls him up onto the bed. BEN (8) the oldest, who also has blonde hair & blue eyes, is holding an IPAD in his hands--playing a game, his head is staring at the screen. Charlie slowly opens his eyes--sweat on forehead.

LILY

What's the matter baby.

Ben stops still in his tracks. Will points at Ben.

WILL

Ben!

Ben scrunches his face and shakes his head no.

BEN

I didn't do anything! I was playing the game first and he just grabbed it out of my hand!

Lily looks at Will then back at Ben.

LILY

And what'd you do after he grabbed the game?

Ben looks down. Silence.

LILY (CONT'D)
Ben, what'd you do?

Ben keeps his head down.

BEN
I punched him and took it back.

Ben looks up.

BEN (CONT'D)
I WAS PLAYING IT FIRST!

Lily quickly gets up and walks over to Ben. Charlie stares at the wall.

LILY
I told you, you never hit your brother, do you hear me!

Lily grabs Ben's wrist.

BEN
Ow you're hurting me.

Ben runs out of the room.

LILY
(YELLING at Ben)
You better say you're sorry and get your butt in gear!

Lily looks at Will.

LILY (CONT'D)
You gonna be ok baby boy?

Will nods his head yes.

LILY (CONT'D)
Ok then can you go start getting ready for school for Momma?

Will jumps out of bed, hugs Lily then runs out the room. Lily collects herself--turns to Charlie blankly.

LILY (CONT'D)
It'd be nice if you could get up and help me downstairs.

Charlie stares blankly at the wall in front of him.

Lily exits room.

Charlie sits up straight in the bed. Grabs a small WOODEN CIGAR BOX hidden under the bed. Charlie checks the door--no one sees. He goes into the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

Charlie turns on the shower--takes the wooden cigar box and opens it. He grabs a small baggy full of pills out of the box--hands shaking. Charlie takes out a credit card and a \$100 bill. He places the \$100 bill on top of a pill and uses the credit card to crush the pill. He rolls the \$100 bill into a straw and snorts the pill. He glances at the mirror too disgusted to stare--walks into shower.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Charlie enters wearing a button down dress shirt, dress pants and shoes--walks toward KITCHEN TABLE. The children are dressed in their school clothes, sitting around the kitchen table finishing their BREAKFAST CEREAL while huddled around an iPad watching something.

LILY

I made your tea and a protein shake for you.

Lily hands Charlie a cup of tea.

LILY (CONT'D)

Protein is over there.

Lily points to the kitchen counter. Charlie walks to kitchen counter and picks up PROTEIN SHAKE. Charlie walks to kitchen table and sits--scrolls through CELLPHONE. Everyone is staring at a screen except Lily.

CHARLIE

Thanks for making my breakfast babe.

Charlie doesn't look up--drinks shake. Lily smiles--tends to making sure children are ready to leave.

LILY

Ok boys are you ready to go to school?

Charlie looks up from his cellphone, groggy.

CHARLIE

I can take them today. I've got a meeting over by the school.

Lily half smiles.

LILY

Ok, thanks. You gotta get going then.

Charlie and the boys rush to get up and make their way across the kitchen to where jackets are hanging.

The two boys put on their jackets.

CHARLIE

Alright I'll see you tonight. Have a great day babe.

Charlie puts on his JACKET.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Ok I love you.

Charlie and the boys are out the door before Lily can respond.

Lily looks around the kitchen at the mess they've left behind. She quickly begins to clean.

INT/EXT. CAR/SCHOOL - MORNING

Charlie pulls up in front of a SCHOOL in his CAR. He drops the boys off in front of their school.

CHARLIE

Love you both. Your mom will be here to pick you up after school. I'll see you tonight.

The boys wave goodbye. Charlie is busy texting MB "yo Im on my way!".

INT. LIVING ROOM HOME - DAY

Lily is cleaning the kitchen and living room at a frenzied pace (montage). She finally finishes and sits down with a glass of wine.

Lily sets down the glass of wine--notices a chip on the table next to her wine, something unclean. Lily reaches to grab the chip--knocks over the full wine glass which breaks. Lily goes into a frantic cleaning mode.

Lily picks up the glass shards from the wine glass--cuts her finger. Lily runs to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Lily runs water on her bloody finger--watches the blood swirl down the sink. She glances at the mirror, but is too disgusted with herself to stare. She stares at the cut.

INT/EXT. CAR/NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Charlie parks his car in a neighborhood--texts MB. "Im out front". Charlie looks around nervously. After a brief wait a text comes to his phone "ight here I come". After another wait, MB (30) a slender man wearing sweatpants, a t-shirt, and sandals with socks, hops into the front seat.

CHARLIE

What's good MB?

MB shakes his head back and forth.

MB

Man, Doggo, Man, it be what it be.
Out here another day makin it,
hustlin another day, another day!

MB dances with his shoulders.

CHARLIE

Ah yeah! Hurd that fam!

Charlie smiles. MB crushes a PILL on a CD CASE with a \$20 BILL and a CREDIT CARD. MB uses the card to cut the POWDER into two piles.

MB

(now somber)

But man you know my wife sick, now
my momma sick. I'm just tryin to
stay out the pen and get this
money for my people.

CHARLIE

That's why I fuck with you MB, you
the realest dude I know.

MB

Appreciate you fam.

MB rolls the \$20 bill into a straw and hands it to Charlie. Charlie snorts a pile and hands the straw bill back to MB.

MB (CONT'D)

Man man, you wanna help me out and
give me a ride for a bit...

MB snorts the second pile.

MB (CONT'D)
I'll kick you 3 of these 15 mg
percs if you give me dat ride.

Charlie smiles and nods yes.

CHARLIE
Shiiiiit for you MB...

Charlie looks happy.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Where we gotta go?

MB points ahead of them.

MB
Drive up here and take a right.

INT/EXT. CAR/ALLEY - DAY

Charlie parks. MB calls someone--places .38 revolver on his lap.

MB
Yea come out. Alright BET.

MB gets out the car--tucks piece in back waste band of pants. Charlie adjusts his rear view mirror to see the action.

MB and JUNKIE talk for what feels like forever. Charlie checks his mirrors and surroundings--thumbs a drum beat on the steering wheel.

CHARLIE
(To himself)
Come on MB.

A man wearing all black and a hood walks past the car. Charlie locks eyes with the man. The world slows.

MB opens the door and gets in. He's smilin.

MB
Alright drive up here (points
forward).

The junkie MB was talking to appears at the passenger window. Junkie opens the passenger door. MB forces door closed.

JUNKIE
 (Yelling)
 Mother fucker, try n rob me

MB
 (Over Junkie)
 Drive man!

Charlie slams on the gas and take off--quickly turns right out of alley. A BANG BANG rings out from behind.

CHARLIE
 What the fuck dude! Why are people grabbing at my car and shooting at us?!?

MB is looking around like a crazy person.

MB
 Man that mother fucker's owed me money bout forever. Tryin to buy shit like he don't owe me. He got what he could pay for.

INT/EXT. - CAR/NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Charlie parks. The engine bay of the car starts smoking. Charlie gives money to MB--gets pills.

MB
 Man Doggo man, here's a few extra for your troubles.

CHARLIE
 Appreciate you fam.

Charlie gets out the car to check.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
 You think she's good.

Charlie is looking at the engine bay.

MB
 She good. Be easy now.

A text comes in from ADAM OFFICE "yo where you at? They're lookin for you!" The front of the car smokes.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Lily lays on top of a made bed looking up at the ceiling. She gets up and finds a box hidden in the room. She stares at the box--opens box. Inside the box are razor blades and cigarettes--looks old.

INT. MECHANIC SHOP - DAY

Charlie is sitting in waiting room--head down, arms behind head.

MECHANIC

Ok so the transmission is completely shot.

Charlie is shocked.

CHARLIE

So you're gonna have to keep it overnight?

Mechanic fidgets.

MECHANIC

I mean we could rebuild the tranny, but with the age of the car, I'd say it's totaled.

CHARLIE

Fuck. Can you just keep it here over night while I figure some shit out.

Charlie's phone rings--answers.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

This is Charlie.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Three older men in suites sit around a conference PHONE in the middle of the table.

BRADFORD

Charlie, it's Bradford. When are you coming in?

INT. MECHANIC SHOP - DAY

Charlie is caught off guard.

CHARLIE
well I'm at the mechanic, my car's
transmission is shot.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

The men shake their heads.

BRADFORD
Look, you haven't been here in
three days and even when you come
in you're late and barely work.
Don't bother coming in. You're
fired. Your last paycheck and any
personal belongings you have in
your desk will be mailed to you.

INT. MECHANIC SHOP - DAY

DOGGO
Fuck you then!

Charlie is visibly angry when he hangs up the phone. He
exits the mechanic shop.

EXT. MECHANIC SHOP - DAY

CHARLIE
(Yelling)
Fu-ck!

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Lily is in her underwear. She holds a razor blade in her
hand--makes a small cut on her arm.

LILY
(Passionately)
Fu-ck!

INT. MECHANIC SHOP - DAY

Charlie re-enters the building frantic.

CHARLIE
I need a bathroom.

Mechanic points to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM MECHANIC SHOP - DAY

Charlie is shaking as he takes out a bag of pills from his pocket. He performs his pill ritual. He sets a card on the sink then puts a pill on top of the card--crushes pill with a bill and another card. Snorts powder.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Lily cuts hidden places on her body. First her thigh, then her stomach.

INTERCUT BETWEEN MECHANIC BATHROOM AND HOME BATHROOM

Charlie pulls at his hair--his breathing is erratic. He rapidly sets up another pill to snort.

Lily picks another spot to cut. She is crying.

Charlie crushes pill--snorts it.

CHARLIE
(In ecstasy)
Awwwww

LILY
(In Pain)
Awwwww

INT. MECHANIC SHOP - MID-DAY

Charlie sits in the waiting room staring off into space. Charlie texts Lily "I need you to pick me up. The car took a shit. Im at this repair shop in the city. Address is 2449 Silver Spring Dr."

INT. SHOWER/BATHROOM - DAY

Lily washes the blood from her body. (Shoot only face and feet--blood swirling down the drain). Exits shower.

Lily sees a text from Charlie.

LILY
Fuck.

Lily quickly dries off.

EXT. SIDEWALK MECHANIC SHOP - NIGHT

Lily pulls up to where Charlie is standing--she's already picked up the kids. Charlie gets in the front seat.

INT. CAR/CITY - NIGHT

LILY
What happened? And why were you
all the way over here?

Charlie sits in silence.

LILY (CONT'D)
What'd your work say?

CHARLIE
Fuck those people.

LILY
What does that mean?

CHARLIE
It means I hated that job so I
quit.

LILY
What? Why would you do that? We
have bills and kids to feed...

CHARLIE
They were always in my business
and I couldn't even have a life
outside that place without pissing
someone off there. I've needed a
new job forever.

LILY
We're talking more about this when
we get home.

Charlie looks out the window at the freeway. The city buildings turn to rural trees outside the car window. Darkness everywhere.

INT. CAR/WOODS - NIGHT

Charlie snuffles hard the drip. Lily glares at Charlie.

The kids fight in the back over the iPad.

Lily reaches back to stop the kids fighting--exposes one of the cuts she made today. Charlie glares at Lily.

A deer's head appears. Lily quickly turns the wheel to avoid the deer. The world slows as the car flips--glass flies at Lily and Charlie's face. The children cry. Real time resumes as the horrific sound of CRUNCHING METAL AND GLASS is heard over black as the car flips.

EXT. WOODED ROAD - NIGHT

The family car lays flipped over in the distance. Two officer stand facing away from the car.

SHERIFF

A whole family wiped from
existence in the blink of an eye.

The Sheriff smokes his cigarette.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Got damn that's some heavy shit.

Throws cigarette. The deputy is looking at his phone.

DEPUTY

Hey you still planning on coming
to my Superbowl party on Sunday?

INT. LIVING ROOM HOUSE - DAY

A slow motion flashback to Lily and Charlie playing with their kids. Lily laughs and smiles. Charlie is playing with the kids too. Everyone looks so happy.

FADE TO BLACK:

END