

IN THE DARK

Written by

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When it comes to grief, the normal rules of exchange do not apply because grief transcends value. A man would give entire nations to lift grief off his heart and yet, you cannot buy anything with grief because grief is worthless.

- Cormac McCarthy, *The Counselor*

OPEN UNDERWATER IN A BATHTUB

Creeping toward the overflow drain --

Light dances across the tub floor in some ominous tango --

Until...

SMACK-SMACK-SMACK-SMACK-SMACK

Crushed ice rains down into the tub --

Canopying the surface like storm clouds --

Shadows descend until a foot stomps into the tub --

INT. BATHROOM - BATHTUB - NIGHT

Lowering himself in is MAX (30s). Lean. Unshaven --

His haggard gaze unshaken by the serrated stabs of the icy water slithering its way up his chest toward the name 'MACY' tattooed above his heart --

Some excess water spills out of the tub --

Pooling beneath a metal wastebasket situated there --

Max's reaches inside it with his right hand. Lifts a metal picture frame out --

Photograph obscured. Corners dinged and dented --

Max holds it there, just above the basket, arm extended --

Then draws in --

THREE...

DEEP...

BREATHS...

Holding the last, Max slips beneath the ice --

Everything submerged save his right hand --

His eyes close --

SMASH TO BLACK...

OVER BLACK

THUMP..THUMP..THUMP

Fast. Measured. Echoing like a kick drum in the darkness --

INT./EXT. THE VOID - TIME UNKNOWN

Endless black --

Scope and scale indiscernible --

Lying somewhere in it, Max. On his back. Lifeless. Small pools water and ice around his wet body --

THUMP....THUMP....THUMP

Eyes snap open --

He scrambles to his feet. Takes in his abyss. Frantic. Looking for something --

THUMP.....THUMP.....THUMP

He spots it --

An object, faint and illuminated in the distant dark --

He darts toward it --

The faster he runs, the slower the thumps become...

THUMP.....THUMP.....THUMP

...but the larger and clearer the object gets --

THE MANGLED, PINK BICYCLE OF A YOUNG GIRL

Max bites down. The limits of his agility reached --

The thumps slow to a near dead stop --

THUMP.....THUMP.....

The bike is almost within arm's reach --

Max's right arm juts out to grasp it --

Then...

CRASH

TIRES SKID

BRAKES SQUEAL

METAL SCRAPS ACROSS CONCRETE

A violent car crash reverberates, deafening the thumps --

Max looks on in terror as the bike falls farther and farther away into darkness --

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - BATHTUB - NIGHT

Max erupts out of the water --

Gasping and pulling his bright-red body out of the tub before collapsing into soaked and sobbing mess --

He claws at his tattoo. Eyes fixated on the basket. Water and tears indiscernible --

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Wet, pruned feet squish against laminate flooring --

Max staggers up to the fridge. Tugs the freezer door open --

Inside, nothing but a stockpile of large ice bags --

He yanks one out --

INT. BATHROOM - MINUTES LATER

Max empties the last pieces of ice into the tub --

Tosses the empty bag onto a heap of others in the corner --

INT. BATHROOM - BATHTUB - CONTINUOUS

Max lowers himself into the water --

Excess water spills over. Pooling beneath the basket --

He reaches in. Lifts the metal picture frame from it --

FIRST DEEP BREATH...

The frame's photograph now visible --

SECOND DEEP BREATH...

Behind a pane of cracked glass is a picture of Max helping
a YOUNG GIRL (5) ride a pink bicycle --

THIRD DEEP BREATH...

Off the picture as Max slips beneath the icy water --

SMASH TO BLACK...