

(Name of Project)

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SCENE 1:

INT. HERMAN'S HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Charles and Fallah are asleep in each other's arms in a guest bedroom.

Mira is asleep on the couch in the living room. Randy and Shelly are on the floor.

Herman turns the light on in his childhood bedroom. It's exactly the same as it was when he was twelve. He goes to the closet and pulls out his Scrabble. He goes to the living room and looks in on his sleeping friends and then drops to his knees and crawls towards Shelly with the Scrabble game under his arm. He shakes the box gently near her ear. She rolls over to see Herman holding Scrabble, eyebrows raised. She throws back the blanket without a word and follows him.

CUT TO:

INT. HERMAN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Herman and Shelly are in the middle of a Scrabble game. Music plays in the background.

SHELLY
Reenswellt? I see you're up to
your old tricks.

HERMAN
It's a word.

SHELLY
What does it mean?

HERMAN
It's a bittersweet reunion.

SHELLY
My ass.

HERMAN
I wouldn't call your ass
bittersweet.

Herman pauses to watch Shelly lay down her tiles.

HERMAN (CONT'D)
Chartrescent? Really.

A new song comes on.

SHELLY

Oh this is one of my favorite songs. It's totally chartrescent.

Herman laughs as Shelly gets up, turns up the volume and starts dancing. She dances as if no one is there. Herman stares at her.

HERMAN

This reminds me of the day we met.

Shelly smiles absentmindedly. She is more interested in dancing than having a conversation.

HERMAN (CONT'D)

You were dancing like a crazy person then too.

SHELLY

When is the last time you did something without overthinking it?

HERMAN

Not recently.

Shelly pulls Herman to his feet. He stands with his hands in his pockets.

SHELLY

Let's do this.

Herman rocks awkwardly.

SHELLY (CONT'D)

Who're you trying to impress buddy?

Herman let's himself go. Herman and Shelly dance with abandon.

They dance closer and suddenly, Herman leans in and kisses Shelly. Shelly pulls away and looks at Herman a beat.

He fidgets uncomfortably under her piercing almost accusatory stare.

SHELLY (CONT'D)

I'm tired. I should get back to bed.

HERMAN

(quickly)

Yeah, me too. What a day I've had.

Shelly smiles sadly at Herman before turning and leaving. Herman sits on his bed and puts his head in his hands.

SCENE 2:

INT. SHELLY'S APT. - LATER

Shelly hums to herself as she sets up a scene in front of her camera. She positions the male and female mannequins facing each other. The male mannequin keeps falling over. Her phone rings.

SHELLY

Shit!

She picks up her phone and sees that it's Herman.

SHELLY (CONT'D)

(annoyed)

Hello?

HERMAN

(a little drunk still)

Oh hi, I didn't expect you to pick up. I left a message but then I had some additional information so...

SHELLY

It's almost midnight.

HERMAN

(defensively)

You sound wide awake.

SHELLY

I'm shooting something.

HERMAN

Can I come over?

SHELLY

(incredulous)

What?

HERMAN

I won't interfere. I can help!

Shelly looks at the scene she's trying to shoot, particularly the mannequin toppled over on the ground.

SHELLY

Ok.

HERMAN

I'll be right there.

Herman hangs up quickly.

INT. SHELLY'S APT. - LATER

Herman is now holding up the male mannequin and trying to stay out of the shot. Shelly adjusts Herman and then adjusts her lights. She looks through the camera.

HERMAN
Is this your first film?

SHELLY
No. Can you put your hand back where I positioned it?

HERMAN
Can I see the others?

SHELLY
It would take a long time. Move it up. Higher.

HERMAN
Prolific are we?

Shelly fiddles with her camera, ignoring Herman.

HERMAN (CONT'D)
Where do you screen? Galleries?
Art houses?

SHELLY
Nowhere.

HERMAN
You just got fed up right?

Shelly doesn't answer.

HERMAN (CONT'D)
I've been trying to write the same novel for over a decade and it's crap.

Shelly isn't paying attention. She's adjusting the camera.

HERMAN (CONT'D)
How long do I stand here?

SHELLY
A while.

Herman drops the mannequin and straightens up.

HERMAN
Nope.

Shelly looks at him angrily.

SHELLY
Herman...

HERMAN
...unless I can watch your films.
That might keep me entertained.

Shelly storms over to the DVD player and puts in a DVD. She grabs the remote.

SHELLY
Go back.

Herman gets back in position. Shelly presses play.

SHELLY (CONT'D)
(muttering to herself)
I thought I would avoid
interaction if I used mannequins.

HERMAN
I bet you're great with actors.

Shelly glares at him.

SCENE 3:

EXT. SHELLY'S APT. - LATER

Herman sits outside Shelly's apartment waiting. Shelly approaches holding a bag from the bookstore. She sees Herman and stops. She pulls a Ralph and Davinia book out of her bag and launches it at Herman.

HERMAN
(calmly)
There wasn't really a right time
to tell you about it.

Shelly walks by Herman and unlocks her apartment. Herman follows her in.

HERMAN (CONT'D)
But the good news is, I never
stopped writing.

Shelly turns on him.

SHELLY
Great news!

HERMAN

You're not easy to please.

SHELLY

You made a fool of me. All the commiserating about not being able to find success.

HERMAN

That was genuine.

Shelly stares out the window, disengaging.

HERMAN (CONT'D)

What does it have to do with you?
It's not a competition.

SHELLY

Of course it is. It's all about how quickly you can hit your benchmarks. You always know where you stand, and even if you're lucky enough to be one of those people who don't pay attention, you're sure to be reminded by some score keeper at every turn.

HERMAN

Is living this way going to make you happy?

SHELLY

Who cares about happy!

HERMAN

I didn't tell you because I couldn't come to terms with the fact that I let my father down. And you said that night that all that matters is the pursuit of truth and beauty. Kind of hard to define horror novellas for pre-teens as honest and beautiful. You were ready to write me off when I told you I'd given up so...so...it was hard to get around to telling you.

Shelly pulls the Ralph and Davinia series out of her bag and stacks the books neatly on the table.

SHELLY

(longingly)

It's quite an accomplishment.

HERMAN

Whatever it is you want so badly, it's eating you alive.

Shelly looks at him blankly.

SHELLY

Why did you drag me back into
your life?

HERMAN

I wanted the old days.

SHELLY

You're are just as hopeless as I
am.

HERMAN

Let's be hopeless together.

SHELLY

You have millions of dollars and
adoring fans to keep you company.

Herman opens his mouth and then closes it. He turns abruptly and opens the door. He looks back over his shoulder.

HERMAN

And who do you have?