

Scraps
by
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EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

A quiet, contented humming is heard. The intense stars in the night sky illuminate the hands of a young woman in close-up.

She is working diligently to attach small scraps of tattered cloth to the outside of a black bag. The needle moves smoothly up and down as the woman works.

She continues to happily hum under the brilliant sky.

FADE TO BLACK.

CREDITS.

FADE IN:

EXT. WOMEN'S SHELTER - DAWN

A dilapidated cement block building. The sky is reddish grey as the sun rises. Letters above a heavy door read "1231 Morrison Street" A rat scampers through the slight opening at the base of the door.

INT. WOMEN'S SHELTER - CONTINUOUS

The rat crosses the empty floor of a soup-line kitchen. It disappears between the hinges and frame of a wooden door into darkness.

A young woman's hand clutches a BLACK BAG with colorful letters that read: "Please return me to 1231 Morrison St." and "There's no place like home."

CUT TO:

INT. BOARDING ROOM OF THE SHELTER - SAME

The rat skitters between the rusty metal legs of a bare matted bunk, up the leg, and over the feet of EVA, 23. Her light eyes watch the rat crawl towards her hands on the bag. She watches it calmly for a quiet moment. It scampers off as two entwined bodies fall on top of her. MAISHA, a young black woman, and CLAUDIA, an overweight immigrant, are fighting.

MAISHA

Crazy white bitch! I think the syphilis
finished yo brain. Don't mess with me!

Claudia spits on her. Maisha pushes her back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAISHA (CONT'D)

Keep your cock sucking mouth away from me. You'll kill me too.

Their weight is crushing Eva as they tussle. She whimpers as she struggles to get out from under them.

CLAUDIA

Look, we woke up little miss priss. Fancy fucking bag for such a stupid one.

Eva wriggles free from under the women. She quickly shrinks away to the cement block wall.

EVA

(quietly)

It isn't fancy. I just work on it.

The two women untangle themselves and lunge for Eva. They tear at the bag. Letters of many colors and shapes have been diligently sewn upon it in rows. The rows are sentences, phrases, and numbers. Only a small space at the bottom left corner remains blank.

CLAUDIA

What'cha got in there?

EVA

(defiantly)

All my things. Things I love. And it's nearly done.

MAISHA

(wrenching the bag away)

S'all right baby. Shows 'em to us.

Maisha handles the bag violently as she dumps the contents on the floor. Claudia twists Eva's arm behind her.

EVA

Wait, no...

MAISHA

Sa' bunch a junk off the street is all. What the fuck the letters all about?

Maisha tugs on the letters. Eva struggles against Claudia's strong hands, but does not scream for help.

EVA

That's all my life. Don't ruin it. You can make your own, just try.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MAISHA

Fuck trying. I just take yours. Can't read none of it anyways. Look pretty though.

EVA

I just want to finish it.

Claudia cackles and twists Eva's arm harder. Maisha parades up and down the aisle between the rusty beds. Several other homeless women have awoken.

CLAUDIA

I think them letters are real smart of you. Maisha - take some to keep for yourself.

EVA

(desperate)

Please. There are only a few to finish. Please, it's all I have.

(beat)

Like your daughter, Maisha. I just have to finish it.

Maisha stops in mid-rip. She studies Eva's innocent eyes silently. She throws down the bag and digs her heel into it.

MAISHA

(to Claudia)

I ain't need to walk the streets and sell my fat self.

Claudia releases Eva to once again lunge at Maisha. Claudia rushes Maisha. As they wrangle, Eva slowly picks up the contents of her bag. She diligently puts it all back together.

INT. SHELTER HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

SISTER LUCIA checks her watch, sighing at the early hour. The lines of her face are years of sympathy and disdain. She does not wear a habit, but a thin gold cross dangles around her veiny neck. She reaches hesitantly for the door handle.

INT. BOARDING ROOM OF THE SHELTER - CONTINUOUS

Complete chaos has broken out around Maisha and Claudia's fight. Sister Lucia enters. Her orthopedic shoes squeak atop the grime encrusting the cement floor. She approaches Eva quickly.

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CONTINUED:

SISTER LUCIA
 (sternly)
 Eva, you have a visitor.

As Eva straightens her sweater, her face lights up with a dimpled grin.

EVA
 (excitedly)
 What a wonderful surprise for a wonderful day.

SISTER LUCIA
 Come see her right now.

She turns on her heels, ignoring the continued pandemonium of the room. Eva reaches out and clasps Sister Lucia's ring finger and pinkie. At the door, Eva looks back over her shoulder.

EVA
 (smiling)
 Have a great day everyone.

INT. SOCIAL WORKER'S OFFICE - MOMENTS EARLIER

CANDICE, 27, sits alone in a bright, cluttered office. She wears smart, business clothes. A leather-bound PLANNER sits open on her lap. The open page in her lap shows dates and times for meetings and dinners. Today's date - January 2nd - reads: "1231 Morrison St." and "Eva."

CANDICE
 (psyching herself up)
 She'll love me. She'll be glad to go.
 She'll have missed me.

At that moment, Sister Lucia enters with Eva in tow. Candice jumps from her chair to embrace Eva, knocking her purse and planner to the floor and scattering scraps of paper.

EVA
 You dropped your papers, miss.

Candice unlocks Eva and Eva begins to pick up the papers. Sister Lucia watches from behind her desk. Candice grabs every handful that Eva picks up before she can replace them to the planner.

CANDICE
 No, no. I must put them all back in their right place. Sit down Eva.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eva is slightly startled at the mention of her name. She is still holding Candice's COMPACT from her spilled purse. She eases into the chair next to Candice as she slips the compact into her large black bag.

SISTER LUCIA

Well now. Let's get down to talking.
Mrs. Leland?

Candice bolts from her chair to embrace Eva again.

CANDICE

(smiling)
The last time I saw you was nearly twenty
years ago. I want you to come home.
With me.

Eva freezes.

EVA

Who are you?

SISTER LUCIA

Mrs. Leland is offering you a place to
stay. She has a nice apartment and a bed
every night.

EVA

I have all of that here and...

SISTER LUCIA

But, the decision is yours. You can
decide yourself what's best.

Candice quickly grabs Eva's hand.

CANDICE

I have a dog and a garden. I even have
bunnies, like you used to love at home.
Remember? My office could use a new
secretary and we can train you. I have
all new clothes for you too.

Eva patiently lets her finish.

EVA

I thank you ma'am. But, my bag is nearly
done.

Sister Lucia comes out from behind her desk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CANDICE

Don't you remember? We grew up together.
We have to be together again - we're
family.

Eva is not convinced.

CANDICE (CONT'D)

(to Sister Lucia)

Is she even capable of making decisions?

Eva looks to Sister Lucia.

SISTER LUCIA

Eva's certainly able to decide for
herself. She's homeless, not dumb.

CANDICE

But, my name is Candice. I am your
sister, Eva.

Eva is unaffected.

CANDICE (CONT'D)

What is that hideous thing she's carrying
around?

Candice motions to her bag. Eva gets up because she has
nothing else to say. As she turns to leave, Sister Lucia
notices.

SISTER LUCIA

Eva, can you wait outside on the bench a
moment while Mrs. Leland and I talk?

Eva nods and quietly closes the door behind her.

SISTER LUCIA (CONT'D)

Mrs. Leland, you must understand..

CANDICE

I don't have to understand a thing.
She's my sister.

SISTER LUCIA

Eva's not like everyone...

INT. HALLWAY OF SHELTER - CONTINUOUS

Eva sits attentively on the bench. A COMIC BOOK sits next to
a faded and chipped STATUE OF MARY in an alcove in the hall.
Eva picks it up and slides it into her bag. Through the
door, she hears Sister Lucia and Candice arguing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She gets up, secures her bag under her arm, and walks down the hall to the door. The angry voices fade.

INT. CITY BUS - MOMENTS LATER

Eva sits alone at the back of the dirty bus, holding the bag in her lap. A BABY BLANKET is wrapped around the leg of a seat in front of her. She unwinds it and pulls off the long threads from the edges. Eva holds it up to see if any pieces will work for letters. She puts it away into her bag as the bus comes to a stop.

EXT. MORRISON ST. - MOMENTS LATER

Eva walks quickly to the corner. As she turns onto the next street, she sees a BROWN DOG sitting next to his owner who is asleep in a box. The dog watches her approach, sniffs at her bag, and lays down when she sits on the curb next to him. His muzzle has a line of greying hairs.

EVA

I am sorry, but I have no food in here for you. I do have lots of things, though. I have been looking for these letters for years.

The dog whimpers in the direction of his master who still lies face down in the box.

EVA (CONT'D)

It'll be alright. I just have a few more letters down here, you see?

She pets his head slowly while lightly touching the open space with her other hand.

EVA (CONT'D)

You know how it is to live on your own, with nothing but what you can pick up and carry. You know how it would be to finish something, something that would be yours alone.

The dog whimpers again and pushes her towards the sleeping man in the box. She pets the dog one last time.

EVA (CONT'D)

You know how to survive like I do.

The dog sits back up again and watches the people around closely. Eva continues down the street.

INT. MCDONALD'S - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Eva opens the smudged glass door and joins the line of people waiting to place orders. The BREAKFAST CROWD looks at her strangely. A few try to move away without being noticed. People maneuver through the mob of customers with trays of warm food. A MOTHER in front of Eva holds a BOY by the wrist as she reaches the front of the line.

MOTHER

I would like a sausage and egg biscuit
and side of gravy.

Eva makes eye contact with the boy and offers him the comic book from her bag. He quickly accepts it.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

(hushed)

Is there any way to get rid of
this...woman?

The CASHIER stares at Eva. Eva looks at her warmly and smiles back. The MANAGER has taken notice. He is the same age as Eva and has fading acne. She steps up to the register next to the mother and child.

EVA

Good morning. I would like the number
six please. The Rise and Shine
breakfast.

Eva beams. The cashier studies her bag and reads a few of the words. She pauses on "My name is Eva and I am homeless." The manager comes out from the back.

CASHIER

That will be two dollars and forty-seven
cents.

Eva digs in her bag. The manager comes closer.

EVA

I don't know if I have...There should be
some change in here. I found a dime the
other day. It was perfect and shiny...

Everyone stares at her while she tries to rummage up some money. The manager whispers into the cashier's ear as Eva's arm disappears into her bag, searching.

CASHIER

Um, no need to worry about it. Your
order is in. Next please.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The manager turns away to go to the back. Eva walks to the end of the counter to catch him.

EVA

Wait, I have something for you.

He stops and hesitates to turn around. Eva pulls out the baby blanket and holds it out for him. He is entirely confused as he takes it.

MANAGER

Please, my boss can't know that I let you not pay...

EVA

Thank you, but I,m going.

Eva quietly leaves without her food as the whole place stares. On the floor next to the trash, Eva spots a blue G5 BUS SCHEDULE. She peels it out of the dirt and slides it into her bag and leaves.

EXT. MORRISON ST. BUS STOP - AFTERNOON

Eva stands to the right of the bus stop sign, nearly propping it up with her own shoulder. Eva stares up into the sky, following the peak of a huge office building. BUSINESS PEOPLE hurry out the glass revolving door. A YOUNG BUSINESSMAN comes up next to Eva to also wait for the bus. She smiles at him.

EVA

Nice day for a bus ride. Do you take the G5 route?

The young man stares off. He looks at his office building and then down at the curb. His suit is just not quite straight.

EVA (CONT'D)

Do you take the G5 too? It goes to the zoo everyday.

BUSINESS MAN

(blankly)

I have never been to the zoo. But, I bet my wife would love to go.

EVA

You should take her sometime. The petting zoo is the best part. They have bunnies.

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CONTINUED:

BUSINESS MAN

(suddenly)

My wife left me. I'm trying to find her.

EVA

I can help you. I know everything here.

The business man studies the letters on Eva's bag. He silently reads: "1231 Morrison St.", "My name is Eva and I am homeless", and "I can help you"

EVA (CONT'D)

You like my bag? I am almost done with it.

BUSINESS MAN

Funny. I'm looking for 1231 Morrison St. I have to stop my wife before she brings home some vagrant woman. She thinks she's her sister.

Eva smiles slightly.

EVA

It is down two blocks on the right.

(beat)

I hope your wife finds her family.

The businessman turns to go.

BUSINESS MAN

I hope I'm not too late.

He rummages in his pocket for some spare change.

BUSINESS MAN (CONT'D)

Oh, here's some money for your trouble.

EVA

No thank you. Actually, I have something for you.

Eva pulls out a faded POLAROID of two little girls playing with rabbits. The bus screeches to a stop and hisses so that the young man's response is lost. Eva presses the photo into his palm and boards the bus just as the doors slide shut.

INT. CITY BUS - CONTINUOUS

MARIA, a middle-aged Jamaican bus driver, eases the bus from the curb and merges back into the rush hour traffic. She waves Eva on from the tiller without making her pay.

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CONTINUED:

She takes the seat directly behind Maria and giggles when the bus stops short and bumps her out of her seat.

MARIA

Praise Mary! No one knows right from left or stop from go.

EVA

Good morning, Miss Maria. How is Jesus today?

Maria looks back at Eva in the large rearview mirror. She chuckles.

MARIA

Still dying on the cross for our sins. Halleluiaah!

Maria crosses herself and eases the bus to the next stop. When the doors hiss open, a YOUNG HISPANIC MAN staggers on. He has obvious track marks on his forearm and his eyes are bloodshot.

MARIA (CONT'D)

(calling out the next stop)
Come up on Davis street. For you papists - St. Paul's on the right two blocks. St. Augustine's 'round the corner. And, Planned Parenthood on the left.

The bus rushes out into an open place in the bustle of cars.

EVA

Miss Maria - do you have a family?

MARIA

Two girls and three boys. Angels from heaven.

EVA

What about a sister?

MARIA

Girl, I got three of those. Handmaidens to Satan, I say. Why you ask?

Eva looks down at her bag a moment. The bottom corner is still empty.

EVA

My sister found me this morning.

Eva sighs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

EVA (CONT'D)

But my bag is nearly done.

MARIA

Praise the Holy Ghost himself! You have a sister to take care of ya?

Eva gazes out the window and traces the outlines of letters on her bag. She is touching - "I have everything in here."

EVA

(strongly)

I can take care of myself. Next stop I am going to finish my bag and show you.

Maria nods slowly. Two YOUNG MEN wearing gang symbol BLING and slouching pants strut to the front of the bus for the next stop. They eye the till.

MARIA

You finish that bag and God bless ya. Next stop - Salvation Army, City Jail, and Second Trinity Church.

Maria slows down again and Eva steps to the doors. They accordion open. Maria presses a GREEN PLASTIC ROSARY into Eva's hand. She puts it in her bag with all the other things she has collected. Eva steps to the curb.

EXT. DAVIS ST. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS.

Eva walks past YOUNG WOMEN who seem to be waiting for something and approaches the first dumpster. Eva stands on a CRATE to see inside it. There is only rotting food. She moves on to the next one, and climbs inside.

DUMPSTER:

The dumpster is filled with old sheets and soiled shirts. Eva climbs in and patiently rummages through them to find clean pieces. She begins to cut out letters with a rusty pair of SCISSORS from her bag.

ALLEY:

The two young women are now joined by a PIMP.

PIMP

Pay up time. You'd better of fucked your money's worth last night.

One of them hands over the money. The pimp counts it. She does not have enough and he pushes her down.

DUMPSTER:

Eva finds a piece of red fabric to cut out a LARGE HEART. Smiling, she works quickly, delicately and gleefully.

ALLEY:

The PIMP yells at the women.

PIMP

I own you. I'm gonna break your face and throw you in with the trash.

The other young woman is defiant and pushes him back. He picks her up and carries her towards the dumpster Eva is in.

PIMP(CONT'D)

See how you like your smell. Rot in there.

DUMPSTER:

Eva is shocked out of her happy task when the young woman is tossed in next to her. Eva motions for the young woman to be quiet. The pimp outside threatens more violence, but he does not climb in after her.

PIMP (O.S.)

I see you around again, I will beat you so hard you can't fuck for weeks.

The young woman's face is streaked with tears. On her neck is a HEART TATOO. She tries to climb out. Eva tugs on her ankle gently.

EVA

Wait.

She listens nervously as his footsteps move off down the alley. The young woman pulls away.

EVA (CONT'D)

He's nearly gone.

Eva offers her the heart she has just cut out. She looks at Eva skeptically, and is still crying. The young woman sits down in the corner of the dumpster.

EVA (CONT'D)

I'm Eva. What's your name?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

YOUNG WOMAN
(through sobs)
Grace.

EVA
That's a beautiful name. Do you have a
home?

The young woman shakes her head and cries harder. Eva hands her a the blue G5 bus schedule and she takes it without looking at it.

EVA(CONT'D)
I don't have a home. I live on my own.
You can too. I have to finish my bag,
but now I have all my letters.

Eva offers her bag for the woman to study.

YOUNG WOMAN
But, I have no place to stay..

Eva points to "1231 Morrison St."

YOUNG WOMAN(CONT'D)
I have no one..

Eva shows her "I am homeless"

YOUNG WOMAN(CONT'D)
(overwhelmed)
How do I get there? I can't...

Eva points to the schedule already in her hand. The young woman nods and lies down in a soft corner of the dumpster. The alley is quiet as Eva climbs out of the dumpster to the wet pavement.

INT. BUS - MOMENTS LATER

Eva has all of her sewing needles and pieces of fabric set out in her lap. The rush hour jumble jostles her, but she continues her work. She has trouble getting a letter straight and has to start over. As Eva is attaching a plaid letter "I", the bus stops short and hits something. People outside scream and run to the front of the bus.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

A BOY lies a few feet from the front of the bus. His schoolbooks are strewn about. The bus doors are open and people pour off to gawk. The boy's eyes are already closed and his breathing is labored.

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CONTINUED:

The BUS DRIVER is still inside the bus, hands frozen to the wheel. Eva comes down the bus stairs and removes the green plastic rosary from her bag. No one steps into the street to help. Eva makes her way to the curb.

WOMAN IN CROWD

Someone stop that woman.

A few nod in agreement, but no one moves. Eva approaches the boy and kneels by him. His breathing is shallow.

EVA

I am here to help.

She straightens his clothes and hair.

WOMAN IN CROWD

(utterly disgusted)

She's touching him.

Eva places the rosary on his chest. The wind flutters the books and trash around him. A CAPLESS PEN rolls by as Eva gets up. She picks it up and puts it in her bag. Cars have now stopped in the street to look on. The ambulance sirens are close.

EVA

You were not alone.

The crowd is watching her silently now. Eva turns away and crosses the street as she begins to cry. The paramedics pull up as Eva aimlessly walks away.

EXT. ALLEY ACROSS THE STREET - CONTINUOUS

As the paramedics work across the street, Eva collapses against one of the alley walls. Her gentle crying quickly becomes sobbing and then gut-wrenching shrieks of sadness.

Eva tears at her clothes. She continues to wail. Her voice joins the panic of the emergency vehicle sirens.

As she loses all composure, Eva starts to tear things off of her bag. She continues to destroy her work. She stands up and kicks at the trash that has collected. As another bus pulls up, Eva steps on a ripped BIRTHDAY CARD. It sticks to her shoe, but is unnoticed.

Eva, still crying, holds the scraps of her letters and solemnly walks to the bus and climbs aboard.

INT. BUS - DUSK

Eva stares blankly out the window with her sewing materials and scraps on her lap. The tight lines of concern on her face have replaced her usual contented smile. As she tries to continue sewing, she catches her forefinger on a pin. The blood flows immediately. She pushes her thumb against the finger, making the blood gather into a thick droplet. Other PASSENGERS stare.

She intentionally pricks herself again and pushes out another drop of blood. She does it several times before the bus stops and she realizes she needs to get off.

EXT. MORRISON ST. - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Eva sits down next to the same dog she visited earlier as a bus pulls away. She looks down the street towards the homeless shelter. The dog whines at her. His owner is still passed out, but laying in a different position.

EVA

I should just go back. My sister will come and get me. She'll put me back together.

Eva looks down at the shredded letters.

EVA (CONT'D)

I was so close. Stupid, stupid. I ruined everything.

She starts to cry again.

EVA (CONT'D)

I've pulled myself apart.

The dog patiently looks at her. As she tries to compose herself again, he sniffs at the card stuck to her shoe. Eva peels it off and admires the flowery picture and big letters on the outside. She opens it and struggles a little to read the message.

EVA (CONT'D)

Happy seventh birthday, Claire. You are a blessing. I hope you like the puzzle I got you. It has a lot of pieces you have to put together, but I know you can do it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eva closes the card and slides it in her bag. She gives the dog a final pet. She smiles gently, gets up, and walks away from the shelter again.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TENEMANT ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Eva steadily climbs a rickety fire escape. As she climbs higher and higher, the noises of the city fade. The honking horns, car alarms, raised voices, and bustling sounds melt away as Eva steps onto the rooftop.

She gently puts her bag and raises her arms to the sky. After taking a deep breath, Eva lays down on the roof. She smiles and looks up at the stars.

The light pollution of the city fades to reveal a perfect, clear starry night. Eva soaks it all in.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GATES OF CENTRAL ZOO - MORNING

Eva looks in the bars of the high fence at the entrance. Families and school groups stroll past cages. Children point and laugh at the animals. Eva walks around the side of the gate to a small door in the wall of the zoo. The door is propped open slightly. Eva puts her hand around the edge to open it. A man's hand covers hers and another hand offers her a handful of WILDFLOWERS. Eva quickly takes them and opens the door all the way. JASON, Eva's boyfriend, emerges from the dark of the hallway, and holds both of her hands. Eva giggles when he cocks an eyebrow at her.

JASON

May I kiss you, Miss Eva?

EVA

(playful)

No, you may not.

Eva puts on a haughty air and squeezes past Jason into the hallway. She slides the flowers carefully into her bag. Their bright petals spill out the top of her bag.

INT. SERVICE HALL OF ZOO - CONTINUOUS

Jason, who wears a maintenance SHIRT, slides his hand around her waist as she walks deeper into the dim hallway. There are several rooms with animal food, dishes, cages, and cleaning supplies. As they approach the door at the end of the hallway, Eva abruptly turns and kisses him passionately.

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CONTINUED:

Their bodies fit together comfortably. They push open the door, leaving the dim hallway and emerging again into the winter sun.

EXT. PETTING ZOO - LATER

Eva is holding a RABBIT in her lap. She strokes it gently while Jason cleans up after the goats in the next pen.

JASON

Your sister could provide for you. She could make your life easier.

EVA

I'm fine. I have my bag. Just a few...

JASON

Eva, it's just a bag. I wish I could give you what your sister can.

The rabbit tries to jump out of Eva's hands. She puts it down and it hops off. She keeps her eyes down, watching it go.

EVA

(hurt)

This is my life. I have made it so far without anyone's help.

Jason finishes cleaning up and dumps his bucket. He comes through the gate to the rabbit pen with Eva. He sits down next to her.

JASON

May I kiss you again?

EVA

No, you may not. I am fine without you.

Jason stares at his feet. CHILDREN come by and laugh at a nearby goat that is pooping. Jason looks at Eva's bag. He touches "I am homeless", "I can help you", "I have everything in here" and "I ride the bus to the zoo everyday." Eva gets up from the bench and turns towards the Undersea exhibit. Jason smiles and gets up to follow.

INT. UNDERSEA EXHIBIT - MOMENTS LATER

Eva walks up to a tank of tropical fish. The room is dark except for the blue glow from each tank. Jason stays one tank behind Eva as she walks around. He studies her in the blue shadows. She lightly outlines letters on her bag as she watches. Jason cautiously approaches Eva. She does not turn to face him.

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CONTINUED:

EVA

I have two more letters and it will be finished.

JASON

I know Eva. Two more letters and you can go.

EVA

Go? I live here.

JASON

This city is too rough for you.

EVA

(sadly)

I love this city.

Jason gets closer to her and watches the eel also.

EVA (CONT'D)

I've seen a child die. I've seen a girl beaten. I've seen gang members. I've even seen my sister.

(beat)

And I have four letters left.

Jason hugs her from behind. She curls into his arms. He whispers to her.

JASON

Can you finish your letters tonight?

Eva nods.

JASON (CONT'D)

Can you be ready to go tomorrow?

She nods again.

EVA

Where?

Jason hands her two GREYHOUND BUS TICKETS. Eva looks at them without recognition. She moves on to the next tank. Jason follows close.

JASON

We can use those to go anywhere in the States. I can get a job wherever we go. You can have your rabbits.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

EVA

That is what my sister said. She
promised me so much.

(quietly)

I don't deserve it.

Jason touches her hand and she pulls away.

JASON

You don't deserve it...

He pauses. Eva turns away and nods.

JASON (CONT'D)

...yet.

(beat)

You can have everything when that bag is
done. And you can take it with you
wherever we go.

Eva turns to him and clutches the bag in front of her body.
They lock eyes. He points to the open spot on the bottom
left corner.

JASON (CONT'D)

Tomorrow. At the shelter.

Eva puts the tickets in the bag, takes out a TOKEN, and
drops the bag to the floor.

EVA

Here is a token for the ride to the
shelter.

She presses the token firmly into his palm. He smiles and
kisses her deeply.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BUS - AN HOUR LATER

Eva is intently sewing on the letter "S". Her hands work
quickly and accurately. In a matter of minutes, she sews on
the last letter. The empty spot now reads, "It is finished."
The evening light is fading fast into the winter skyline.
Eva moves over to let an ELDERLY WOMAN sit down. The woman
immediately notices Eva's bag.

ELDERLY WOMAN

That is beautiful.

Eva blushes and smiles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELDERLY WOMAN (CONT'D)

I bet that is very useful. I don't have much to carry around anymore, but I could have used it sometime ago.

EVA

It's my life. Look..

Eva points to the now completed bottom corner.

EVA (CONT'D)

Today I finished it.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Will you still add to it?

Eva stares at her hands a moment. Several of her fingers still have faint pin prick holes. Eva grabs the flowers that are still spilling out.

EVA

No, I am going away now.

Eva places the wilting flowers in the elderly woman's lap. She wraps her gnarled fingers around them.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Well, good luck.

Maria, the bus driver, overhears this conversation, and has been watching in the large rearview mirror.

MARIA

It's good to see the grace of God lift a soul out these slums and deliver them to a better life. I never thought I'd see the day. God bless you Miss Eva.

Eva looks at Maria in the mirror a moment and turns to watch the city roll past the bus windows.

EVA

I am not going with my sister.

Maria eases the bus to the curb and opens the door to more passengers coming home from work. Once the doors are shut again, Maria jets the bus out into the traffic.

MARIA

What? Oh, this blessed bus can be so loud sometimes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

EVA

I am going away with Jason, not my sister.

MARIA

My Lord. You get out that rosary I gave you. Start praying for the Lord's mercy.

EVA

My bag is finished. And I gave your rosary to a dead boy. He can use it better than me.

Maria quickly glances up at Eva in the mirror. She is studying the ugly buildings that rush by and the people hurrying around, taking in every detail. Maria watches the road again for a long, silent moment. At the next stop, Eva stands to get off.

MARIA

God bless you.

As she passes the tiller, Eva puts down the birthday card from her bag and steps easily to the curb. She turns towards the shelter as the last flashes of daylight are extinguished by the cloudy sky and towering buildings.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Maisha stands with two MEN in the moonlight halfway down the alley. The two men are dressed in leather jackets and each has a large gold ring. She begins to back up towards the wall as the TALL MAN approaches her.

TALL MAN

I don't care if you don't have the money. We have to pay our bosses somehow.

He grabs her and Maisha screams. Eva walks past the entrance to the alley as the SHORT MAN grabs Maisha's legs and they wrestle her to the ground.

SHORT MAN

You scream again and I'll slit your throat.

Eva squints into the dim light down the alley.

MAISHA

Help, help. They'll kill me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TALL MAN

You are seconds from dead. Shut the fuck up.

Eva boldly turns down the alley. The tall man is standing over Maisha, and the short man holds a knife to her throat.

INTERCUT:

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - EVENING

The boy from the McDonald's sits on his porch reading his new comic book as the sun sets. In the background, his mom and dad are fighting and yelling at each other. The boy smiles as he turns to the next colorful page.

ALLEY:

MAISHA

Mother fucker. I ain't got the money.
Kill me if ya want.

Eva stops under the light from a window when she sees the knife. Maisha kicks at the man and tries to get away. Eva picks up her pace and comes into Maisha's view. The two men notice her.

INT. MCDONALD'S - NIGHT

An EMPLOYEE screams as his hand is covered in hot grease. The young manager grabs the torn baby blanket that is sitting on the counter, soaks it in the sink, and runs to help the man.

ALLEY:

SHORT MAN

Get the fuck out of here.

EVA

Maisha is my friend. I am going to help her.

MAISHA

Go away, Eva. They gonna kill you too.
I ain't worth it. Get outa here.

Eva comes towards the short man. The knife is still at Maisha's throat. He releases Maisha a bit to point the knife at Eva. Eva goes for something in her bag.

EVA

But, look, Maisha. You're beautiful.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She opens the compact and holds it over her to look at her reflection. The tall man hits it away and it breaks on the street.

TALL MAN
What the fuck?

He kicks Eva down. She reaches for a nearby brick.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - NIGHT

The business man looks down at the faded photo of his wife and her sister with bunnies. He strokes the frayed edges. He gets up from the plush couch and watches his wife, Candice, yell on the phone through the glass of her office. She slams the phone down.

ALLEY:

TALL MAN
Fucking crazy. Let's just kill them both.

Maisha wriggles free from the short man and lays on top of Eva to protect her. Eva hands Maisha the brick before the tall man drags Eva out from under her by her hair.

EXT. BUS STOP - NIGHT

The hooker from the alley steps down off a G5 bus. Her makeup is smeared, but she is no longer crying. A HANDSOME, WHOLESOME YOUNG MAN with a wide smile is waiting for her. They hug and he kisses her forehead.

ALLEY:

The short man rips off Eva's bag and dumps it onto the pavement. Maisha sits with the brick behind her back. The fountain pen rolls under the short man's foot and the bus tickets flutter away on the wind. He picks up the pen and smiles at it.

EVA
Take it. Take what you want. But, not the bag. I just finished.

INT. HOSPITAL - EVENING

A gurney rolls quickly past. Doctors rush to help. A young boy's body is surrounded in tubes and bags as he enters surgery. In his left hand is a green plastic rosary.

ALLEY:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The tall man throws the bag to the short man who quickly shreds it. He cuts through "My name is Eva", "I am homeless", "I can help", and "It is finished." Colorful scraps fall onto the wet pavement and soak up the dirty water. The tall man pockets the pen. Eva closes her eyes.

Maisha rushes the tall man with the brick. They wrestle and he pulls it away from her.

EXT. GATES OF CENTRAL ZOO - NIGHT

Jason locks the maintenance door behind him and walks quickly to the sidewalk. He pauses under a street lamp to look at the bus token in his hand. He flips it through his fingers and over the knuckles several times. Smiling, he replaces it to his pocket.

ALLEY:

The tall man slams Maisha against the pavement and her head hits hard. He goes to Eva and raises the brick. Eva looks into his eyes and does not move.

EXT. CEMETARY - DAWN

The elderly woman from the bus trudges up a cement path to the plots at the top of the hill. Her gray hair is blown fiercely by the wind. She approaches a headstone that reads "My beloved John." The woman puts down the flowers and kneels in front of the grave. She lays her head down on the ground.

ALLEY:

EVA
Just don't hurt Maisha.

The tall man begins to pound her face hard. Maisha looks up. The short man just laughs.

INT. BUS - NIGHT

Maria slowly opens the bus doors. Her eyes nearly close from fatigue. A THUG approaches her from behind. He puts a gun to her temple.

THUG
Give me the money. No one is going to get hurt.

Maria looks over at the birthday card Eva left. One of the thugs catches her glance and looks at the card too. Maria folds her hands to pray.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARIA

You are a blessing. You are a blessing.
You are a blessing...

ALLEY:

As the tall man hits Eva over the back of the head, Maisha gets up and grabs the pen out of the short man's pocket. She stabs him in the neck. Eva lies still. The tall man drops the brick, it lands on the compact mirror, crushing it. The short man coughs and falls to the ground. Maisha hesitates and looks at Eva lying face down in a puddle. She runs.

TALL MAN

Get the fuck back here!

The tall man chases after Maisha. Eva moves her hand a bit to reach out for her bag. A breeze scatters the scraps around her. She has one last breath.

EVA

I had just finished.

She stops moving and her eyes look out over the puddle. The stars are reflected perfectly in the greasy water. The moon is high, peeking out from the city lights.

FADE TO:

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

A quiet, contented humming is heard. Maisha sits on Eva's favorite rooftop and hums to herself. She quiets her breathing and relaxes.

Maisha's reflection can be seen in the broken compact that she holds. She stares at her own face for a moment and then turns the mirror to the sky to reflect the brilliant star light onto her smile.

FADE OUT.