

THE DINER

Written by

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CHARACTERS:

Friend 1

Friend 2

Woman

3 to 10 Extras

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BLACK.

SFX: Knocking on a door. The door opens. Muffled voices can be heard. One says something like "Have you seen this man?" Another replies something like "C'mon you know you can't be doing this."

FADE IN:

I/E. DINER - DAY

SFX: A spoon clinks twice against the lip of a coffee cup.

Two friends having coffee and pastries at a diner, sitting at a table by the window. Xey are each sunk deep into their seats after a long hard day. People pass by outside the window.

EXT. NYC SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Pedestrians moving up and down the sidewalk.

INT. DINER - CONTINUOUS

FRIEND 1 stares into xeir cup of coffee, zoning out, slowly dripping cream down into the black liquid one drop at a time, one tiny splash after the next, as the cream marbles back up to the surface, casting clouds.

FRIEND 2 tries not to stare at **FRIEND 1**, who xey know is going through it.

FRIEND 2

How long has he been missing?

FRIEND 1

Four days, six hours. Since Tuesday morning when he left for work at his usual time.

FRIEND 2

Well, we'll just keep knocking on doors.

FRIEND 1

Yeah.

EXT. NYC SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Pedestrians moving up and down the sidewalk.

I/E. DINER - CONTINUOUS

FRIEND 2

How long had he been sick?

FRIEND 1

I'd only noticed really on Sunday. Now though, when I think about it, I think he'd been showing symptoms for a week or more before that. He just wasn't making sense sometimes when he was talking. Nothing big, but just a couple of things here and there.

FRIEND 2

Like what?

FRIEND 1

Like he'd use a name instead of an object. He said he had to "wash the Roger" when he meant "wash the dishes". Weird shit. Small shit.

FRIEND 2

(Beat)
(Sudden recollection) His eye was twitching.

FRIEND 1

What?

FRIEND 2

That day I met him outside his work -what was it, two Wednesdays ago? Anyway, we couldn't talk long because he was just kind of out of it, and his eye, it was twitching. A lot.

FRIEND 1

His left eye?

FRIEND 2

Yeah.

A long silence comes over them both.

EXT. NYC SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Amongst the pedestrians, a **WOMAN** clutches her chest. Her teeth chatter, and she ducks away from others, shielding herself. A couple of people notice this, and move swiftly away from her, keeping a close eye as they gain distance.

I/E. DINER - CONTINUOUS

The two friends avoid eye contact, their silence holding them hostage.

FRIEND 1
(Breaking the silence)
He's gone.

Another, smaller silence lingers for a spell.

FRIEND 2
Bobby didn't let himself turn. No way.

FRIEND 1
No. No he didn't. No, Bobby's in the river.

Another silence.

EXT. NYC SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

The woman clutching her chest looks up at the sun, takes a deep breath, letting life itself move through her nostrils and fill her lungs, making a point to treasure it. Her left eye twitches.

FADE OUT.