# Expiration date

Ву

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(c) 2013

INT: BEDROOM - MORNING

Mark, 29, tall, but lacking the meat to compensate, is stretched to the ends of his bed. Eyes fully wide, as he stares up at his ceiling.

His room resembles the aftermath of a natural disaster. Piles of clothes stacked up high, draws remain half open. Has the look of weeks of neglect.

An alarm clock rings off.

Motionless, as his eyes drift toward his alarm clock. He see's it's 9:00.

MARK(V.O) If someone would have told me I'd be dead before thirty, I'd prolly' just laugh in their face. That was before I got the letter. My... *expiration papers*, as they say. Now...Now it just doesn't seem that funny anymore.

Mark slowly rises up from the bed. Runs his fingers through his hair, as he presses back the skin from his forehead.

# MARK(V.O) I mean I guess I'm not alone. They say about a hundred and fifty five thousand people die each day. That's a lot people if you ask me. And I'm sure not all of them got the courtesy of a letter.

Getting up off the bed, Mark rummages through his draws, putting together an outfit for the day.

He glances over at a small end table in his bedroom. Laying on top, The letter.

#### MARK(V.O)

It's like hitting the death lottery. But it reads more like a rejection letter from college. "We are sorry to inform you, that you will expire in the next two weeks. You have our deepest sympathies. P.S Please do not take this opportunity to act out in a matter that does not conflict with your local federal and state law. Basically, don't lose your shit, and go on a massive killing spree. INT: KITCHEN

The refrigerator door is wide open, as mark guzzles down a gallon of milk.

He gags and spits it out.

MARK Aruurg. The fuck...

Mark checks the expiration date on the milk.

It's a week old.

MARK(CONT) Of course it expired.

EXT: MARK'S HOUSE - DAY

Mark walks over to his car, that's parked just outside his house. He cautiously approaches, checking below the car for any signs of leaks.

He opens the door and eases himself into the seat. Gently pulling down on the seat belt. He checks over every Minuit detail, before starting the car.

Finally, he feels...protected.

Engine running, he checks his mirrors before merging into traffic. Coast is clear, he pulls off turning left into the street..

VROOOOM!

A blur of a car comes surging past him, just inches from a collision.

MARK JESUS, FUCK!....Really?...This is gonna be a long day....

He reflects on what he just said.

MARK(CONT) God willing.

EXT: JIM'S CAR/DRIVING - MORNING

A plethora of cars envelop the road. Mark keeps steady in his lane. His eyes shift and pan around him. A cautious awareness, compared to his usual heedlessness.

Without warning, traffic ahead comes to abrupt halt.

Mark jams on the brakes, screeching tires bring his car inches from impact, with the car in front of him.

He exhales.

MARK Pull it together Mark.

EXT: FIRST NATIONAL BANK - DAY

Mark pulls his car into a spot across the street from the bank. He turns the ignition key, killing the engine. Rather than getting out, he pauses... drifting off into thought.

He snaps himself out with a shake of his head. Reaches over to the gloves box, fishing his hand for something. He clutches it, and pulls out... a piece of paper. The letter.

He gets out and shuts the door. Over his shoulder he can see an unmarked suspicious car. With two even more suspicious gentlemen, dressed in all black, staring back.

He shrugs it off and make his way into the bank.

INT: FIRST NATIONAL BANK - DAY

Waiting next in line, Mark does a casual scan of his surroundings. He notices the two suspicious men from before, sitting on the bank's leather sofas.

An elderly women taps Mark on the shoulder.

ELDERLY WOMEN

Your next.

MARK (taken back) What?

ELDERLY WOMEN Your next...she's open.

Mark realizes he's holding up the line, and proceeds to the teller.

TELLER Hi, how can we help you?

Mark swallows, then speaks.

MARK Hi..I'm looking to...I want...I want make a withdrawal. TELLER Ok, how much will you be withdrawing?

MARK All of it.

TELLER All of it?

MARK Yep. I want all the money... I got. Checking, savings, clean it out. And I have this, it says it's good for five hundred dollars on the day of expiration.

Mark hands the teller the letter.

TELLER Oh.... OK. Will you be closing your account also today?

MARK What do *you* think?

The teller realizes the idiocy of that question.

TELLER

Yea...right. uhm...Alright, just uh...slide your card and put in your pin in for me.

He pulls out his wallet, a small pocket picture flutters to the ground.

Mark bends over to pick it up. Its' a cute little bowling alley type picture of him and a pretty blond.

He gets lost in thought again as he stares at the picture.

TELLER Sir? Your card.

MARK Yea I got it right here.

Mark puts the picture back in his wallet, then swipes his card. Types in his pin, and stands patiently for his money.

The teller puts a stack of cash through a counting machine. Then slides it into an envelope. TELLER OK, you had 467 dollars and fifteen cents in you checking. And you had 1850 in your savings. Plus the five hundred dollar voucher. So, you got total of two thousand eight hundred, seventeen dollars and fifteen cents. I'm just gonna' put it here in this envelope and...

The teller slides the envelope underneath the glass.

TELLER(CONT) ...You have a nice day now.

Mark props up a smile.

MARK Yea... I'll try.

He turns from the teller and heads for the door. On his way out, he notices the two suspicious men are now gone.

EXT: FIRST NATIONAL BANK - EXT

Slumped over to the side is an old burly, thick bearded homeless man. Reeking of piss and bourbon.

Mark exists the bank and is immediately hit by a foul stench.

He looks down to see the old homeless man sleeping. Mark reaches into the envelope and gives over blindly, half of the stack of cash he withdrew. Dropping it in the homeless man's lap.

The bum rises from his drunken stupor. His eyes widen at the bank roll on his lap.

HOMELESS MAN Sir you dropped your money.

MARK I didn't drop it, I gave it to you.

HOMELESS MAN

All of it?

MARK Yea. You could use it more than I can. HOMELESS MAN There's over a thousand dollars here.

MARK

I know.

HOMELESS MAN Wha' jue' get dat' letter or somthin' kid?

Mark doesn't respond.

## HOMELESS MAN

Shit you did, didn't you? That's a damn shame. Young kid like you, had your whole life ahead of ya'. See at least back in my days, we didn't have no expiration date. Like we were all some god damn perishable fruit. Takes out all the mystery and fun out of life if you ask me. I guess it don't matter for an old geezer like myself. I wont be getting any letters. I guess they didn't think about the homeless when they hatched that up, huh.

The old homeless man laughs it up. Exposing the rows of missing teeth in his mouth.

MARK Just don't go spending it all on booze, OK.

HOMELESS MAN Cant make any promises kid.

INT: MIKE'S AUTO PARTS - DAY

Over by the counter is..

TRACY, 24, blond co worker, with a punk rock look. Tattoo's of red roses and thorns slither around her wrists, Sits in utter shock..

TRACY Are you serious?

MARK Serious as a heart attack. TRACY

Don't even say that. How come you didn't tell us?

MAR I didn't want people looking at me different. Or maybe, I just didn't want to be reminded by it.

TRACY

Did you speak with Kate...I know you guys been broken up for almost like six months. But you were also together for like six years.

MARK I tried to reach her. She doesn't return any of my calls.

TRACY Yea I haven't spoken to her in weeks also.

JARED, 27, one of Mark's close friends, as well as his co worker, chimes in.

JARED Are you fucking shittin' me? You're tellin' us, today is your last day...alive? Like any moment you could just fall out and die?

MARK That's what I'm saying.

JARED You should have told me. You know what we could have did in these past few weeks. Fuckin' Vegas, strippers, all the fucking drugs that are body can take at once....before we pass out. And you been just coming to work everyday like everything's fuckin' normal for the past two weeks?

MARK I guess I was hoping it wouldn't really happen.

JARED Oh it's gonna happen. My cousin's roommate got that letter last year. (MORE) JARED (cont'd) Hit by bus. His body was dragged for like three blocks before the driver stopped.

TRACY I don't think he wants to hear about that.

JARED Well he should. Because that shit, that letter. That shits fareal'.

MARK How do they know? And how come we don't know how they know? Why is nobody asking questions?

## JARED

I don't know exactly how a combustible engine works, but I know it can move a car.

## TRACY

What?

#### JARED

Listen... people say this shit might even be alien related. Me personally, I believe it's some kind of social experiment. Or maybe a form of population control. A way of thinning out the herd. They got agents in place everywhere. They could be parked across the street right now for all we know.

Mark glances out the window.

## JARED(CONT)

They could be the weird guy in the supermarket, an old lady in a bank, a bus driver...

## TRACY

Really? And old lady?

#### JARED

See, that's exactly why it will work. You'll never see it coming.

MARK I think you need to stop smoking that PCP.

JARED I'm off that....it's started fuckin' with my decision making.

Tracy shakes her head and smiles.

TRACY So what are you gonna' do today?

JARED Yea if I was you right now, on my last day, I'd be on beach in

Tahiti, smoking a blunt while getting brains from a Scandinavian bitch.

TRACY Scandinavian?

JARED They give the best head.

TRACY Your gross. And your a liar.

JARED Oh stop, lets not play the virgin card now.

TRACY Fuck you Jared.

MARK

You guys need some time alone or something?...I mean hello...(raises hand) Fuckin' dying over here.

TRACY No..if we did, it wouldn't take long.

JARED What's that suppose to mean?

TRACY I'm just sayin'...girls talk.

#### JARED

If I was you man, I might even go on on banking robbing spree. One bank after another.

Mark shakes his head.

## JARED

Why not?

MARK

Because in order to pull something like that off. Somebody would probably have to get shot. And I'm not looking to take people down with me on my last day. That's not how I want to go out.

#### JARED

I'm just saying man. Don't waist no time today. Live it up. It's fucking awful it had to be you to get one of those letters though. We too young for that shit. When it's the old people, who really gives a fuck. They're old. They had their time. But man...your getting jipped out of at least forty years.

## TRACY

It's like I want to cry, I just cant. I guess I cant believe it. I mean you look so healthy. What are you gonna do now?

MARK

I dunno'...drive around.

JARED

Drive around? Dude, you should have planned this day out better.

#### MARK

Even if I crammed a hundred things to do today, I'd still be far short of a life fulfilled..I don't know....Let me get out of here...

Mark heads for the door.

#### JARED

Yo Mark...I'm gonna get a tattoo of you on my back.

MARK You don't have to do that. That's...that's a bit much.

JARED Nah it's gonna be nice. I'm gonna have your face blown up, there's gonna be blood drippin', it's gonna' be sick, you'll see....well...you wont see, but...its gonna be sick.

MARK Thanks man. You guys take care.

TRACY Yea...you too.

Mark walks out the auto parts store.

EXT: DRIVING - DAY

Pulling up to a train crossing, Mark slowly applies the brakes.

The suspicious car from earlier, pulls behind Mark.

Mark glances through his rear view, recognizing the familiar car.

DING DING DING DING cont..

The wooden train barrier, blocks the road.

Mark looks back, then straight ahead. Jams on the gas and fly's through the barrier. Breaking wood hits the windshield and tumbles off the car as the oncoming train nearly crushes Mark's car.

Escaping near death, he releases a joyous celebration. Pounding his steering wheel, while yelling out the window.

> MARK You guys are gonna have to fuckin' earn it today!

He speeds off down the road.

EXT: CEMETERY - DAY

Mark stands over two conjoined tombstones. The inscription reads... "Always and forever".

The names of Margret Baker and Jim Baker rest up top.

Mark's parents.

He crouches low to the ground and lays a bouquet of flowers beside the grave

He leans over and kisses the tombstone.

MARK

(emotional) I miss you guys so much. It wont be long now...I cant wait to see you.

He leans over and kisses it again before he turns and walks away.

INT: CHURCH - DAY

The door opens, Mark makes his way into a seemingly empty church. An afternoon sun, beams light rays through the stain glass windows, lined up on the walls.

Mark walks into the confessional booth.

He sits down.

MARK Father...you there father?

FATHER ....I'm here.

MARK Well...where do I start. I guess I have questions more than confessions.

FATHER What is it that's on your mind?

## MARK

Today I will die. I know because...my expiration papers say I will. So then I guess my question is...how do they know? And if they do know, is it God whose telling them. And if it is God....why? Why burden us with the knowledge of our deaths. To me it seems counter productive, if the goal is to reshape humanity. To change us..for the good. Then I don't see how making up five hundred dollar vouchers on the day of expiration,

(MORE)

# MARK (cont'd)

and say.."Now go in the bank and cash that",..is a good idea. I cant tell you the thoughts that run through your head. Standing in line at a bank, on the day you expire. Talk about temptation. But then again, what good is it to have all the money you want, if you wont be alive to spend it.

## FATHER

OK...so what was your question?

#### MARK

Is it God? Is this whole thing, these letters...is it god?

## FATHER

The lord taketh' as he will.

## MARK

See, what does *that* mean? I need straight answers at this point. Time is a bit of an issue here father. If I wanted scripture, I'd pick up a bible. I'm sure you guys have an extra copy lying around here. I need to know, is it god that's saying I will die today?

#### FATHER

The lord is responsible for all things. Every soul that reaches his kingdom of heaven has been predetermined. He has a plan for all of us. And these expiration papers...this knowledge of ones death. Is surely the work of the lord. Who else would have that myriad wealth of knowledge of all his children? You see, every day I get more and more people asking me that question. Is it god? And what I tell them is...That's not the question you should be asking yourself. The principal of faith does not require an absolution. Instead...with this new knowledge of death, how will I conduct myself. It's a test. The ultimate test of one's true morality...the character of a man is defined in

(MORE)

FATHER (cont'd) the actions we take. So the question you should be asking is, what do we do now?

## MARK

So your saying, If I conduct myself in a way god approves of, then passing his test affords me the right into heaven.

## FATHER

If you lived a life of good. God will reward you.

## MARK

Ok...at this point..I'll buy it. It's either god or aliens. And if it's aliens...may god help us all.

## FATHER

What I suggest for you is to spend your remaining hours with the ones you love. And prey that god forgives you.

#### MARK

Or what? He'll strike me down? I'm already a marked man father.

## FATHER

Your soul can also burn in a perpetual fire with pain and agony being the only sense you feel. Being ripped apart -

MARK

Ripped or raped?

## FATHER

Ripped.

## MARK

Oh I thought you said raped. Cause' I know all about all the fire and brimstone, but no one talks about rapes in hell. I don't get down like that. No ass rapin' goin' on over here.

#### FATHER

Hell consist of your worst fear, manifesting itself for eternity. If (MORE) FATHER (cont'd) being raped, by another man is your worst fear. Then that's what your hell would be. Just a large room of..."ass rapin' highly erect men...and you....without your pants. For eternity, over...and over again. So...hell is bad.

#### MARK

Jesus father, did you have to be so graphic. This is why this place is empty. Your laying down that old testament pretty thick on us. Now that I think about it. I'm leanin' toward the aliens.

EXT: SUBURBAN HOUSE - DAY

Parked out front, Mark stares at a white house, with green shutters.

He takes in a breath, the exists his car and heads for the front door.

The door is slightly open. Mark is leery to walk in. He decides to push the door further open as he slowly takes a step forward.

## MARK

# Hello?...Kate...

He enters the home, passes the living room couch to see Kate, covered in blood as she lays on her side.

Mark rolls her over to her back.

He checks her pulse....nothing.

He feels the blood with his finger tips and realizes that this took place a short time ago, the blood is still wet.

He pops up with his head on a swivel, maintaining alertness, as he struggles to comprehend what took place.

From the deep corner of his eye, he spots it....The letter, face up on the coffee table.

He picks it up and reads...

Shocked and in a total state of disbelief, he lets the letter slip through his fingers as it flutters to the ground.

The pain and agony that he feels inside, is abruptly interrupted by a pain of a different kind. A sharp steel blade burrows its way through his lower back.

MARK

Ahhhhh!

A strung out junkie pushes the blade deeper inside, as he pushes him forward and over the coffee table. Mark falls over and takes the junkie with him.

The blade is removed and used to stab Mark repeatedly. Hands, shoulders, chest.

Mark manages to hold the next in pending swing of the junkie's right arm. The junkie feverishly presses all his weight down on the blade.

JUNKIE Your gonna' fuckin' die today.

MARK Yea, I know. But not by you.

JUNKIE That your girlfriend? Do you want to know what I did to her before I killed her, or before you showed up?

The junkie gestures a kiss.

JUNKIE Best piece of ass I had this week.

The junkie laughs.

Mark summons the rest of his strength and will and turns the wrist of his attacker. Stripping the knife out, he lunges over, grabs it and dishes out some payback.

He swings the blade around and stabs the junkie in the forehead.

Instant death. The junkie drops to his back.

Mark crawls his way to Kate. He throws his arm over her waist and presses closer.

Dying, and rapidly losing blood...Mark closes his eyes.

He dies.

Moments later..

Sounds of hard bottom shoes hitting the wooden floor approach closer and closer...

The two suspiciously looking men that Mark spotted earlier, step into frame.

The mystery men look down at all three bodies.

MYSTERY MAN #1 Success.

MYSTERY MAN # 2 Agreed. Though this one here...

MYSTERY MAN # 1 You don't believe he deserved this, do you?

MYSTERY MAN # 2 It seems a bit excessive...his expiration.

MYSTERY MAN # 1 We don't set the design. All we do is monitor it's implementation.

MYSTERY MAN # 2 I know and I understand the importance of the design. This one in particular has all three aspects merged in one. Kate shut the world off and fell into despair. This poor excuse of a man was driven strictly by his selfish and most devious desires. And then there's Mark...he didn't fall into despair, he didn't act out on his basic impulses. He just continued living. Denying the truth. On the surface, this all...seems deservingly so. But his file is borderline. A decision could have been made to -

## MYSTERY MAN # 1

To what? Save him? It's not our job to save him. He could have saved himself, along time ago. Don't get hung up on this guy. I know this your first time out in the field. It gets easier, trust me. They're not hard to manage once you get passed it all. For every Mark, they're thousands more, and most of MYSTERY MAN # 1 (cont'd) them have families. Children left behind. Talk to me when you reach a 100 thousand. Then see what you think.

MYSTERY MAN # 2 I think this is going to be a long millenia.

MYSTERY MAN # 1 God willing.

The two mystery men casually walk out the house....

The door remains open as a hand pops in and closes it shut.

THE END