

Homewood Drive

By Dominic Cerasi

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INT. BEDROOM

An alarm clock blares several times before a man's arm slams it off. His eyes red and strained, barely a wink of sleep. MARTIN slouches over as he sits up on the edge of his bed, a large exhale exits his body as he stands.

INT. HALLWAY

He staggers through the barren hallway, a gloomy morning light struggles through the windows.

INT. BATHROOM MIRROR

The water running, he reaches his hands under the faucet and splashes the cold sink water onto his face.

INT. BEDROOM CLOSET

Martin shuffles through shirt after shirt in his closet. His stoic, expressionless face passes each one. He stops and plucks off a white dress shirt. He returns to the grey and gloomy hallway.

INT. BATHROOM MIRROR

He meticulously fidgets with his tie. Frustrated, he braces his hands against the sink, letting his head hang.

INT. KITCHEN

He swings on a black suit jacket. A buzz noise comes from his phone. He ignores it and exits.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF HOUSE

Instead of grey skies, welcoming rays of sunshine fall upon him. ANN stands in the driveway, standing against the Silver Pathfinder, dressed in jeans and a red sweater.

ANN

What took you so long? I've been waiting.

MARTIN

Well I wanted to look nice for you.

ANN

Aren't you gonna be hot in that?

MARTIN

I don't think so. You're the one wearing a sweater.

ANN

I'm always cold. You know that.

She smiles and shrugs her shoulders playfully. They both enter the car.

EXT. HIGHWAY

The car hums along the open highway. No other cars in sight, just the lines on the road and the passing trees as company.

INT. CAR

Ann sits sideways in the front passenger seat, her back to the side window. She's smiling and nibbling on the edge of her sleeve.

MARTIN

What? What is it?

She keeps smirking, her hand in front of the lower part of her face.

MARTIN (Cont'd)

You're gonna ruin the sleeve.

ANN

(Sarcastic)

Oh, am I?

She opens the glove compartment and then starts searching through the center console.

MARTIN

What're you looking for?

ANN (Cont'd)

The CD's in this old thing, where did you put them...Ah here we go.

She takes the CD out of the case and slides it into the stereo. The year "2002" is written in sharpie on its cover. The opening intro plays for several seconds as Ann sits back in her seat. They both nod their heads to the opening notes.

MARTIN

Ah, of course.. That's the sweater you had the night we met.

ANN

Mmhhh.

MARTIN

And this was the song that was playing wasn't it?

Ann smirks and nods her head.

MARTIN (Cont'd)

I can't believe I didn't realize at first.

ANN

First time I ever went there too.

MARTIN

What even made you go that night?

ANN

Sarah dragged me there after the show. It was on the way back to the apartment so she wanted to get a drink.

MARTIN

You guys ordered food too didn't you?

ANN

Ugh, we got those disgusting mozzarella sticks. It came in a beer bucket thing.

MARTIN

I don't think I ever saw someone actually order food from there. I mean

the walls were decorated with dried gum.

ANN

So that's what it was then?

MARTIN

What was?

ANN

My fearless attitude that hooked you in?

MARTIN

If someone willingly eats from there at midnight, they must at least be an entertaining conversation.

EXT. HIGHWAY

The car continues down a long stretch of highway, the trees on the side start to give way to large open fields.

INT. CAR

His right arm rests on the steering wheel. His left hangs out the side of the window. She has her feet up on the front windshield, her right arm hanging out the passenger window. The humming of the car engine continues. Until the song "Mad World" by Gary Jules begins, they both mimic the beginning piano keystrokes with their hands outside.

ANN

You were scared of this movie at first weren't you?

MARTIN

Oh not again with this.

ANN

Come on, there's no sense trying to act tough in front of me.

MARTIN

You took this and really ran with it  
didn't you?

ANN  
You said you were scared.

MARTIN  
I said the giant rabbit was "scary"  
okay? Not that I was scared of the  
movie.

ANN  
Mhmm.. Okay.

MARTIN  
Come on a 6-foot rabbit in a mirror?  
That's terrifying.

ANN  
Sure, sure, yes I believe you.

MARTIN  
I actually think the story is  
interesting.

ANN  
Is that something you think about a  
lot?

MARTIN  
No, that was years ago-The rabbit  
doesn't scare me anymore, okay?

ANN  
No not that, I'm talking about the  
theme of the movie. A single event  
causing so many different outcomes?

MARTIN  
No. I don't know. It's just the story  
they used.

ANN  
Do you ever think about what would've  
happened if we never met? And what  
would be different now?

MARTIN

No. And I never would have changed that.

ANN

How are you so sure? What if everything didn't happen as a result of us meeting? Certainly our lives would be different, right? What if not meeting me could have prevented-

MARTIN

(Interrupting)

I don't regret anything okay. Nothing. Every moment from the past right up to now. I don't regret any of it.

She sits back in the passenger seat. Looking forward at the clear road ahead. He grips the steering wheel tighter.

ANN

I know what I regret.

Martin raises his eyebrows, half turning towards her.

ANN (Cont'd)

That we didn't get that puppy when we saw him in the store window, what kind was it again?

MARTIN

I think it was called a Basset Hound.

ANN

Yes! The Basset Hound. Aw with the floppy ears and everything. I don't know why we didn't get it. It would have been nice taking care of something together.

MARTIN

It would have.

ANN

Maybe one day.

MARTIN

So that's your big regret?

ANN  
That's the biggest one!

MARTIN  
Well, that's a relief then.

ANN  
I guess it was better off. Could you  
imagine the mess in the house if we got  
him?

MARTIN  
I would have cleaned up.

Ann rolls her eyes.

MARTIN (Cont'd)  
You don't think so? Hey check the house  
now, it's spotless.

ANN  
It's barren.

MARTIN  
It's clean.

She drops her eyes disapprovingly.

MARTIN (Cont'd)  
Okay here we go.

ANN  
No no, it's fine. It just needs.. It  
just needs some-

MARTIN  
(Interrupting)  
What? What does it need?

ANN  
It just needs to be fluffed up a bit,  
add some life into it.

MARTIN  
I guess you like to make jokes now huh?

ANN



I've always been funny. You just don't listen.

MARTIN

Yeah, sure.

Martin checks his watch, taking a composing breath. He winces and clutches the lower part of his stomach.

ANN

What's wrong?

MARTIN

I could use some of those mozzarella `sticks now.

ANN

Oh don't tell me.

MARTIN

Relax. I'm fine.

ANN

When's the last time you ate something?

MARTIN

I haven't been hungry. I'm fine. It's just some nerves.

ANN

Nerves?

MARTIN

Yeah. It happens on days like this. You know that.

She flexes her eyebrows up and shrugs her shoulders.

ANN

You'll get used to it.

MARTIN

I'm not sure I ever will.

EXT. THE CAR EXITS OFF THE HIGHWAY

The car follows the exit down another long road. On the right side of the road is a gas station.

ANN

You're on E.

Martin squints his eyes at the gas meter.

MARTIN

Ah shit.

EXT. GAS STATION

Martin stands next to the car holding the gas pump. A black Jeep is parked at the pump across from him. SLOAN rests her phone on the Jeep's hood, she's scrolling on the screen and holding the phone in the air.

SLOAN

Excuse me are you from around here?

MARTIN

Sort of.

SLOAN

I'm looking for Mitchell's Canyon, I know it's off this road but my phone keeps switching locations on me. Do you know where that is?

MARTIN

I do actually. It's just a little further up on the right.

Sloan looks down at her phone again. She then extends it out towards him.

SLOAN

I'm sorry, but do you mind pointing it out on here? I just don't want to drive past it.

Martin looks back into the car. He then walks over towards her. She hands him her phone, he scrolls through and then turns it towards her.

MARTIN

It's here.

He points on the phone.

SLOAN

Ok, ok, so it's just before the bend.

He turns so he's side by side with her and continues pointing at the phone.

MARTIN

And if you want a recommendation, here is a great trail to follow. You can park here and then follow it up north.

SLOAN

That looks like quite a hike, do you go often?

MARTIN

I used too. Haven't in a long time.

SLOAN

I've never been out here, but I read online it has some of the best trails.

MARTIN

It does, it's beautiful up there.

He smiles and turns to walk away.

SLOAN

Oh umm, I'm Sloan by the way.

She extends her hand out.

INT. CAR

Martin sits back in the drivers seat, turning on the car and checking the gas tank again. Ann sits against the passenger window smirking at him.

ANN

So, Sloan huh?

MARTIN

How do you know her? You-

He stops himself after realizing his question and Ann's mocking look.

ANN  
It's okay to think that.

MARTIN  
Think what?

ANN  
She's pretty.

Martin doesn't respond. He pulls the car out of the gas station.

EXT. RAILROAD CROSSING

The car slows to a stop as they see the flashing red lights of a level crossing. The car stops just before the train tracks.

ANN  
I don't remember this being here? Did you go a different route?

Martin's phone starts ringing.

MARTIN  
Hi mom...

Ann sits up excitedly.

MARTIN (Cont'd)  
Yeah I'm almost there... No I just got stopped at the train crossing... Yeah at Willoughby... Yeah no, everything's uh-

ANN  
Psst. Tell her I said hi.

MARTIN  
Everything's..

ANN  
Go on tell her.

MARTIN  
Yeah everything's good. How are you?

Ann purses her lips and starts shaking her head.

MARTIN (Cont'd)  
I'll be fine... I know, I know you  
do... Things will be tough for a  
while... I know.

EXT. A TRAIN SPEEDS BY

MARTIN (Cont'd)  
I'll uh, I'll- Sorry what was that? Oh,  
It's um, it's better... Yeah each day  
has been better.

EXT. THE GATE FOR THE CROSSING RISES

MARTIN (Cont'd)  
Okay... Okay, I'll be there soon.

INT. CAR

Ann is resting her head out the window, the bright sun  
shining down on the ruby red sweater. The car passes  
over the railway, her dark brown hair blowing back  
from the wind. She notices him looking at her, she  
grabs his hand and holds it in hers, smiling.

ANN  
So what did mom have to say?

MARTIN  
Just checking in.

ANN  
I love that woman. She's always been so  
nice.

He smiles and nods his head.

ANN (Cont'd)  
What is tough?

He looks at her tilting his head, not understanding.

ANN (Cont'd)  
On the phone there, you said something  
about things being "tough" for a while.

MARTIN

I just meant with everything going on,  
it will take some time.

ANN

Time? You're taking time off from your  
job?

MARTIN

Just for a month or two.

ANN

Oh don't tell me? You're doing that  
walk thing aren't you? The Camino de  
something?

MARTIN

*Camino De Santiago.* It's what we always  
wanted to do, wasn't it?

She nods. The car turns into a gated area.

MARTIN (Cont'd)

I figure if not now. I probably never  
will. Maybe it will help clear my mind.

ANN

(Interrupting)

Why is now the right time?

MARTIN

Over 500 miles...Do you think we could  
survive that? You know I was supposed  
to go a few years ago, during that  
summer, the summer we met.

ANN

Why didn't you?

MARTIN

It just didn't feel like the right  
time. If I'd have went. Well, there's  
the change you were talking about  
before.

EXT. THE CAR ROLLS TO A STOP

ANN

And what do you think will change this time?

He takes a deep breath trying to think of an answer, he then starts to crack up in laughter.

MARTIN  
I have not the slightest clue.

Ann starts laughing with him.

ANN  
It's good to know where you're going.

MARTIN  
And you? Where are you going?

She smiles and leans closer towards him. Her face close to his. He closes his eyes.

ANN'S VOICE (O.S)  
I'll be there.

EXT. GREY SKIES

He glances outside the car. The grey and gloomy light from the morning returns.

INT. CAR

He turns back and reaches for the passenger seat. Sitting on the seat is a small wreath of flowers, he reaches in his glove compartment and pulls out a photo in a plastic bag, pinning it to the top of the wreath. In the photo Martin and Ann smile, his arm around her shoulders, her head resting on his, in her red sweater. He grabs the wreath and opens his door.

EXT. HOMEWOOD CEMETERY

Walking up the path to the cask iron-gate, he passes through the entrance arch marked *HOMEWOOD CEMETERY* and down a row of headstones.

The End