

SIMULACRES

Written by

Robin C. Johnston

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INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

A hazy outline of leaves against bright light. The leaves are from a Bonsai tree, sitting in its pot, on a brightly-lit white windowsill. Perfectly manicured fingers caress the leaves.

MARIE, ageless, slim, with almost perfect skin and features, is tending her Bonsai, clipping the sides of the branches with a deep concentration.

A tiny drop of shining water falls on one of the leaves. Marie stares intensely at the tiny tear that just dropped from her cheek. She seems confused and wipes the trail of water away.

An OLD MAN shuffles into the white room. He seems disorientated, confused by his surroundings. His hands shake slightly.

The room around him is all white. White lines and wide white walls. No pictures at all. Everything is sterile. Huge patio door windows look out onto a Japanese style garden.

OLD MAN

My dear, do you live here? Do you know
the way out?

Marie smiles painfully at him.

MARIE

Yes, my darling.

EXT. JAPANESE GARDEN - DAY

Marie holds the arm of the old man, both to steady him and hold him close.

OLD MAN

This is so beautiful.

MARIE

Yes, it is.

OLD MAN

I feel like I've been here before.

MARIE

You have. Many times.

OLD MAN

Many?

MARIE

You tended the garden regularly.

OLD MAN

It must have been a long time ago.

MARIE

Very long. You built many beautiful things, Ezra, in your time.

The old man's head bows.

You are tired, my love. Come inside.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Marie stands at the kitchen counter chopping onions. She stares back through the patio doors into a conservatory where Ezra sits. The old man sleeps with a white cat on his lap.

Marie hardly notices that tears are dripping down her cheek again. She grimaces and looks down.

She has cut herself with the knife. She looks curiously at the small trickle of blood on her hand as the deep red drips onto the kitchen worktop.

A small yellow light flickers on a box on the wall next to the worktop. The box beeps again, insistently. Marie wraps her injured hand in a small cloth and presses a button on the box.

MARIE

Yes?

A voice answers. Male, young, devoid of emotion.

INTERCOM

Marie?

MARIE

Can't it wait?

INTERCOM

The time was decided on. How is Ezra?

MARIE

The same. A little worse maybe.

INTERCOM

Please list his symptoms.

MARIE

Weakness, amnesia, loss of cognitive functions, insomnia-

INTERCOM

Marie, your husband cannot function like this. It is cruelty to perpetuate his condition.

MARIE

I know.

INTERCOM

We must start the process-

MARIE

(interrupting)

I know!

Marie slams her injured hand into the counter. She looks back at Ezra sitting still in his wicker chair in the conservatory. He stirs and looks back up at her.

Another tear drips down her cheek. She wipes it off and gets a smear of blood on her perfect pale skin.

INTERCOM

Marie, mourners will be with you soon, and the seniors will join them.

MARIE

I understand.

She presses the box again. The light goes out.

INT. CONSERVATORY - DAY

Marie walks into the conservatory, holding a mug of cocoa and a small pile of white clothes. Ezra has fallen asleep again in his chair, snoring lightly. The white cat watches her.

MARIE

Ezra. I brought your pyjamas.

EZRA

Is it so late already? The sky is still light.

MARIE

It is late. Get ready, my love.

Marie puts the clothes down next to Ezra. Ezra points at her cheek.

EZRA
You've been crying, my dear?

MARIE
I have? I have.

EZRA
Is that blood?

MARIE
I cut myself when I was cooking.

EZRA
Let me see.

He clasps her hand. The cut has disappeared!

MARIE
I'm fine. Don't worry.

EZRA
Look. I found this.

He shows her a photograph. The picture shows Marie and a broad shouldered, good looking young man of her own age. They are both smiling warmly, and the man has his arm around her. The photo looks very old, wrinkled and faded.

EZRA
Is that you, my dear?

She does not answer.

Who is this young man?

A barely registered jolt of pain passes across Marie's face.

MARIE
Ezra, we will have visitors soon. Please put these on.

EZRA
What visitors?

INT. HALL - DAY

Ezra shuffles softly in his white slippers into the hallway, a hall as sanitized and white as the rest of the house. His white linen pyjamas sit uncomfortably on his old frame.

EZRA

Marie, are you there?

The white cat appears and sidles up to him. Ezra bends down to pet it. He hears footsteps and looks up.

Several people wearing white suits approach. Most are wearing masks that cover the lower part of their face, except one. A striking looking YOUNG MAN appears from the back of this small crowd.

His voice can be recognized as the one from the intercom.

YOUNG MAN

Ezra?

EZRA

Do I know you?

YOUNG MAN

It's good to see you again, old friend. Our seniors are honoured to meet you at last.

EZRA

Me?

YOUNG MAN

Of course. You are the creator. The originator of our process. We have so much to honour you for. You need to come with us now?

EZRA

Why?

YOUNG MAN

Marie?

Marie walks out from behind the crowd.

MARIE

Ezra. It's time to go home.

EZRA

This isn't my home? My memory is not what it was.

YOUNG MAN

That is why we are here, sir.

He nods to two of the men in white suits next to him. They walk out and take Ezra's arms.

EZRA

Marie? Where are we going?

MARIE

Please don't be afraid, Ezra.

EZRA

I don't want to go. (to Marie) I want to stay here with you.

MARIE

You will. Soon.

The two men lead Ezra away. The young man walks up to Marie. She still has the smear of blood on her cheek.

YOUNG MAN

What happened to your face?

MARIE

Ezra said I was crying. I didn't know we could...

She wipes another tear from her cheek. The young man looks at her strangely, then he walks off after Ezra and the suits.

Ezra takes out the old photo he had in the conservatory. He shows it to a suit, pointing at the young man next to Marie.

EZRA

Young man, can you tell me who this is?

SUIT

Yes, sir. It's you.

THE END