## SERIOUS ISSUES

Written by

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INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

A man is sitting at his computer desk recording his thoughts into a portable voice recorder.

BRAD

The is so much freedom in being insane. You don't just think outside the box you live outside the box unless its in a cardboard one or in jail but hey give stigma the finger and let everyone know cloths are optional. I never pushed the envelope I smacked it out the park and wrote return to sender in blood. Four long terrible years of being recovered now its time to get free again.

Brad turns off the portable voice recorder and places it on a table in front of him next to his medication and a glass of water. He drops his tablets into the glass.

BRAD (CONT'D)

I'm drowning, I am drowning, just drowning in medication.

There is a knock on his bedroom door. It is his mother telling him that dinner is ready. Brad leaves his room and joins his mother for dinner in the dinning room.

**JANE** 

So young man what have you been doing this evening?

BRAD

Just playing games.

JANE

Well my day was fascinating I must have put about five hundred different stamps on five hundred different letters.

Jane laughs and smiles at her Brad while twirling her pasta around her fork.

BRAD

So the post office is treating you well mom?

**JANE** 

Yes it is.

Jane takes a sip of her red wine.

JANE (CONT'D)

Yes it is.

There is silence between them as they both finish eating their dinner together. Once Brad finishes he kisses his mom on the cheek.

BRAD

I'm just heading out for a little bit mom. I will be home later.

**JANE** 

Have you taken your medication?

BRAD

Of course.

**JANE** 

Well you go and have fun.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Brad is standing in front of an inner city apartment door. It opens and a man grabs him by the collar and pulls him inside slamming the door behind him.

DODGE

Brad, Bradley, b boy, bad boy wanna bong?

Dodge holds a giant bong pointing in Brad's direction.

**BRAD** 

Hey Dodge I gotta talk to you.

DODGE

Tell Mary Jane all about it. I can hook you up with her.

Dodge and Brad laugh together.

**BRAD** 

You were my dealer for years before my so-called illness made me supposedly insane. And I have been playing it by the doctors book the last four years and honestly I haven't been more fucking miserable.

Dodge nods his head while exhaling marijuana smoke.

DODGE

B boy the only doctors book to play it by is Dr. Zuess's.

Brad reaches into his pocket and pulls out a fifty dollar note and hands it to Dodge.

**BRAD** 

That's why I am here mate. To meet the author.

Dodge takes the money and throws a bag of marijuana into his lap.

DODGE

Lets get you published.

Dodge passes the bong to Brad and he takes a deep breath and smokes it.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Brad is asleep in his bed and stones are hitting his window. After three have hit it a bigger one goes through his window causing it to make a hole and landing on his head. Brad opens his window and looks out. He is angry.

**BRAD** 

Anton! What the hell man? Use my fucking doorbell.

ANTON

Sorry man I wasn't sure it your mom was home.

Brad shakes his head slightly confused.

BRAD

So what if she is? Better you knock on her door than knock her house down! Anyway lets go grab some breakfast I got to talk to you. Your paying.

Brad gets in Anton's car and they drive to get breakfast.

INT. CAFE - DAY

Brad and Anton sit opposite each other reading the menus.

ANTON

So what's on that crazy mind of yours?

BRAD

Listen I have lost my freedom and I want it back. I have a lets say experiment that I need your amateur assistance with.

ANTON

So what's the experiment?

**BRAD** 

I'm off my medication and back on drugs. Just before you judge me or try to tell me it's a bad idea hear me out.

ANTON

Mate calm down I was just going to order poached eggs.

Anton gets the waitresses attention. She comes over to the table.

WAITRESS

What will it be gentlemen?

ANTON

Poached eggs on toast.

**BRAD** 

Scrambled eggs on toast with bacon. Thanks.

Anton and Brad put down the menus and Anton now has Brad's full attention.

ANTON

Look mate I realize that it must be hard for you at times but seriously? Drugs?

**BRAD** 

I know but it's not me just quitting life. It's me taking up life and I need your help.

ANTON

What can I do? Go on fast food runs for you when your to stoned to move?

BRAD

You still have that video camera?

ANTON

Yeah. So?

The waitress comes to their table with their breakfast.

ANTON (CONT'D)

Thanks.

As the waitress is walking off Anton is checking her out.

ANTON (CONT'D)

You dirty bastard.

**BRAD** 

Listen. I need you to make like a video diary of me off my meds and I need you to load each segment online.

ANTON

Why?

BRAD

Because 1 in 5 people have a mental illness. And they need to know the truth.

ANTON

What truth?

**BRAD** 

The truth about freedom and I mean real freedom. Freedom I once had before they medicated and hospitalized me.

ANTON

Count me in. It's not like I got a job to go to. However I have a unappreciated unemployed chef waiting at home so I got to get back man.

BRAD

Thanks Anton. This means lot to me.

ANTON

No probs.

Brad gets the waitresses attention and she comes over to their table.

WAITRESS

How is your food?

BRAD

Really good but we have to go so I need a doggy bag.

WAITRESS

Of course.

The waitress walks inside.

ANTON

Take mine too. If I get caught even smelling of food other than my womans. I will be hung, drawn then quartered.

**BRAD** 

Then cooked.

They share a laugh and the waitress approaches their table with a plastic container for them.

ANTON

Thanks.

BRAD

Thank-you.

Brad puts the remaining food into a plastic container and Anton pays for the food then they go their separate ways.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Anton walks inside his house and his girlfriend is sitting on the couch watching a cooking show. When she sees Anton she turns of the television.

SARAH

So where did you disappear to?

ANTON

I just went to see Brad.

Sarah walks close to Anton and smells his breath.

SARAH

Eggs. Poached. Prick!

ANTON

Brad has stopped taking his medication and is back on the weed.

SARAH

So?

ANTON

So I am worried about him. But I can understand.

Anton walks into their bedroom and starts rummaging through their stuff finding his video camera. Sarah follows him and stands at the door looking at him with an angry expression.

SARAH

If you think we are going to make a sex tape think again!

ANTON

No Sarah it's not for that. Brad wants me to document him.

SARAH

Document him? What so now I'm not good enough to make a sex tape with so your doing it with your bum chum?

ANTON

I cant win.

SARAH

Oh yeah and since you stopped eating my food I'm going to stop eating your dick.

ANTON

It was just breakfast.

SARAH

Whatever.

Sarah walks off and goes back to the TV. She yells at him from the lounge room.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Your twenty fucking four Anton. Get a job!

Anton takes the video camera with him as he leaves the house.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Tosser.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Anton and Brad are in Brads bedroom. Anton is focusing the camera on Brad.

ANTON

Lights, camera...

Brad smokes a bong.

ANTON (CONT'D)

Satisfaction.

BRAD

So here are my first two cents on the mental health system which over time will turn into a piggy bank.

Anton laughs.

Brad reaches for a couple of pieces of paper.

ANTON

What's that?

BRAD

A rap song I wrote to kick start this.

ANTON

Go ahead.

BRAD

Mania has gone now depression has kicked in/ He wont blame-ya for medication but wants back that mission/ Believing he was a saviour and wants to give more than a demonstration to prove his king/ And move the seas/ Truly believed/ That his immune to defeat/ So pills down the drain and bongs all day/ Even made a video diary to prove his no clown more a saint born too late/ In a mental cage/ Asking people to document it with pencil to page/ He was multi-dimensional but the chemical would make this story unforgettable/ There he was stuck in the middle of the crossroads/ Really not giving a fuck hanging out with hobos in ponchos/ He didn't need no-doze/ This was the plan to loose his mind one last time Then he would be choose to be blind in order to open his third eye.

ANTON

Dope.

Brad clears his throat.

ANTON (CONT'D)

There's more?

BRAD

In another dimension without support from anyone.

ANTON

Hey!

**BRAD** 

Your now his brother and remorse from everyone/ Now the cops and docs wanna find him/ 'Cos his running around the city with his cock out might cop a hiding/ But this man is only a threat to himself/ And GOD dam they say his got to get help/ Put him in a room no fan no belt/ It took weeks but they finally found him/ He gave the book a tweak and refused to get off his mountain/ Everyone confused when he tells them his drowning in the lounge room/ But other patients either loved or loathed him/ In there he was famous for his devotion to the potion/ But as weeks fly off the calendar he begins to feel evil/ So it's bye bye to grins and attempting to heal people/ His ready to express/ Beware its heavy without anything being suppressed.

Anton shuts off the camera and follows Brad into the kitchen. Brad is going through the kitchen cupboards stocking up on tinned goods.

ANTON

So Brad where can I find you if your not gonna be home?

**BRAD** 

The park in the city.

ANTON

Why there?

BRAD

I have to find Joe.

ANTON

Who's Joe?

**BRAD** 

Joe is the man. Just make sure you bring the camera. Meet me there at 7.30.

ANTON

OK.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Jane walks through the front door of her house. She smells the scent of marijuana and drops her shopping bags and storms to Brad's room.

**JANE** 

Brad! Brad!

Jane knocks on his door and lets herself in the room. The smell is very strong in his bedroom. He is not there. Jane sits on Brad's bed and notices where his medication should be is not there. She calls Anton from her mobile phone.

JANE (CONT'D)

Anton. Have you seen brad?

ANTON

No I haven't. Is everything alright?

JANE

No it's not his gone and so is his medication. This whole house smells of weed.

ANTON

That's terrible. If I hear from him you will be the first to know.

Jane hangs up.

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Anton is finishing uploading the video he shot of Brad earlier that day on the internet.

EXT. HOUSE - EVENING

A brown car pulls up in the driveway of Jane's house. A man walks out and approaches the front door. He rings the doorbell and while waiting for it to open he adjusts his tie in the reflection of the window next to the door. Jane answers.

JANE

Calvin?

CALVIN

Yes ma'am. May I come in?

**JANE** 

Of course. Please do.

INT. HOUSE - EVENING

Jane escorts Calvin into the lounge room and they both sit down.

CALVIN

First question. I know it's an obvious one but have you notified the police.

**JANE** 

Yes. They left moments before you arrived.

CALVIN

Good. Now can you please tell me the situation?

Calvin reaches into his pocket and gets a small notebook out and a pen ready to take notes.

**JANE** 

Well it started seven years ago when my son son was diagnosed with bipolar and drug induced psychosis. There were several hospitalizations and it was chaos for three years.

Calvin nods his head and continues to write.

CALVIN

Please go on.

**JANE** 

He got off the drugs and got his act together. Four years of being stable and many visits to the psychiatrist and psychologist I just did not see this coming.

Jane starts to cry and reaches for the tissues.

CALVIN

OK. Your doing great. Can you tell me where he might be able to be found? For example has he been known to go to places in the past when he has been unwell that he believes are safe?

JANE

The city. I have told all this to the police. But the city is where he feels safe. I don't know why that place is full of danger. CALVIN

I understand. Now Jane I will be back tomorrow for to gain further information. I'm very sorry to cut this short but I will return. Can you please tell me what time suits you?

**JANE** 

Tomorrow. Anytime really I am not going back to work until my boy is home safe.

CALVIN

Absolutely.

Calvin hands Jane his card.

CALVIN (CONT'D)

Now Jane this has my mobile phone number on it and feel free to call me anytime regarding any information you might have regarding your son.

JANE

Thank-you Calvin. I will.

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

Anton is walking through the park with the video camera looking for Brad. He finds him with Joe.

JOE

So young Bradley that's why JFK was more evil than Adolph Hittler.

BRAD

It makes total sense.

Brad offers Joe a cigarette. Joe takes it and lights it up.

BRAD (CONT'D)

Anton! You must film this.

ANTON

Mate I don't know if you should be doing this.

JOE

This is vital. Now turn on that camera.

An ambulance approaches and two ambulance officers exit the vehicle and walk towards them.

AMUBLANCE DRIVE #1 Which one of you is Bradley?

Anton points to Brad whilst looking guilty. One of the paramedics put his arm over Brad's shoulder.

AMUBLANCE DRIVE #2

Come on son lets get you safe.

Brad is escorted to the back of the ambulance and looks over his shoulder at Anton.

ANTON

Sorry Brad. I had to call them.

INT. PSYCIATRIC HOSPITAL - MORNING

A man with a red tie enters the hospital and is approached by a doctor.

DOCTOR

You must be Stuart. We have been expecting you. My name is Hector.

Both men shake hands.

STUART

Glad to finally put a face to the name Doctor. What is the current situation with young Bradley?

Doctor Hector goes through his notes and finds Brad's sheet. He has a look of concern on his face.

DOCTOR

Yes. Brad is in a state of psychosis. Drug induced by the looks of things.

STUART

Marijuana?

DOCTOR

It looks that way. I notified his mother and she will be in shortly for a rundown of Brad's current mental health situation.

Stuart nods his head.

STUART

Excellent. May I speak with him?

DOCTOR

Absolutely. I will show you to his room.

Hector looks at Brad's sheet again.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Room four. Follow me please Stuart.

INT. ROOM FOUR - MORNING

Brad is sitting on his bed opposite another patient who he is sharing the room with him..

BRAD

OK Bret. You spit first.

BRET

Nothing and everything it's all awareness/ Something is measuring tall and I sense unfairness/ I had two cents but I was careless/ Using then cruising/ Boozing then bruising/ I've got a hunch back from bending over backwards/ I said I've got my hunch back and I'm penning nothing slapstick/ Slap that stick off your lips/ A dead roman gave me spiritual whips/ And wanted bread hoping it came with fish/ I blame this shit/ On a hate mission/ I just got admitted to Satan's kitchen/ Rhymes now on your plate Brad keep it bitching.

BRAD

Now that Bret's attention is mine/
I wonder what his perception is on
blood turned to wine/ Is there a
connection with that and the
divine?/ You don't have to stop at
every sign/ I have crazy legs/
Maybe we need tents/ Then I can
save my rent/ But that is no way to
pay my debt/ Sex sells/ When the
hex is felt/ I'm no joker even when
the deck is dealt/ Bret's dropping/
Oxycotin/ That's why I'm not
boxing/ On my noggin.

There is a knock on their door and Hector walks in followed by Stuart.

BRET

Hey doc.

DOCTOR

Morning gents. Bradley, Bret this is Stuart.

**BRAD** 

Jesus. It's Jesus.

Stuart looks at Hector then approaches Brad. Bret leaves the room with Hector and the bedroom door is closed behind them.

STUART

Brad I'm a mental health advocate. Do you know what that means?

Brad ignores him.

STUART (CONT'D)

Well basically im here to make sure you get the best possible medical treatment and that your rights are honored.

Brad looks him in the eye and shakes his head. There is a sound in the background of a window being shattered and someone screaming. Stuart gets up and races out of the room to see what all the commotion is.

INT. PSYCIATRIC HOSPITAL LOUNGE ROOM - DAY

Bret is holding a chair above his head and there is a broken window which he put his fist through as his right hand is covered in blood. His eyes lock onto Stuart and when they do he throws the chair at him but Stuart dodges it. Security restrains Bret.

BRET

That's him! The devil! You want Brad's soul but you can't have it. You piece of shit. Brad is the messiah and your a liar!

Two security guards take Bret to the high dependency unit and Hector approaches Stuart.

DOCTOR

Stuart, are you OK? Danger doesn't just put people in hospital it also happens in here too.

STUART

I'm OK. Yes my experience in this field has been a never ending learning experience. Do you mind if I continue my conversation with Brad?

DOCTOR

Absolutely. Are you sure your alright?

STUART

Not on fire yet but I think Bret would argue that.

DOCTOR

Alright. Come and find me if there is anything I can assist you with.

STUART

Much appreciated.

Stuart walks back to room four and enters it. Brad is lying on his back with his arms stretched out. When he notices Stuart he quickly gets up and looks him confidently in the eyes.

BRAD

So. You want to cure me or destroy me? You can't do either, everyone has tried. You see truth can be spoken without words and your truth speaks for itself.

STUART

Elaborate.

BRAD

I know you. My father knows you. Anyone with a heart that doesn't pump oil feels your poison without consumption. Stay away from me! Your goat is visible.

STUART

Brad, I'm here to help to make sure you recovery is well let's say at this point a possibility.

Brad walks into his bathroom and walks back out with a towel over his head.

BRAD

Excuse me.

Brad walks past Stuart and exits his room leaving Stuart there by himself.

INT. PSYCIATRIC HOSPITAL DOCTORS OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Sarah is sitting on a chair opposite Hector. Next to her she has a bag full of positions belonging to Brad.

SARAH

Please doctor you must help my boy needs to get better and come home and be with his mother where I can take care of him.

Sarah's eyes are filling up with tears.

SARAH (CONT'D)

His not safe here.

DOCTOR

I assure you Sarah at this point he couldn't be in a safer place.

SARAH

The violence that happens here. What about the violence? My son is a sensitive soul. He needs me.

There is a knock on the door and Sarah looks over her shoulder strait away.

DOCTOR

Yes, come in.

Stuart enters the room.

STUART

I'm sorry. I don't mean to
interrupt.

Sarah whips her eyes.

SARAH

It's fine. Who are you if I may ask?

Stuart approaches her and he extends his arm for a a hand shake. Sarah excepts and stands up.

STUART

Stuart. I'm here to make sure patients get all the help they require and I'm currently working with your son.

SARAH

I have just been speaking to Dr. Hector and requesting a discharge of my boy. Can you authorize that?

Sarah sits back on her chair holding either arm rests and looking up at Stuart in hope and desperation.

STUART

I'm afraid it's up to the team here. But in my opinion he has quite a road ahead of him before considering discharge.

Stuart pulls up a chair next to Sarah.

STUART (CONT'D)

Has the doctor discussed the possibility of ect?

SARAH

What's that?

DOCTOR

It stands for electroconvulsive therapy. Now it has a high success rate and I think is the best option for Brad given his current mental health.

SARAH

No way you can't zap my son. That should be illegal. That's inhumane!

Sarah exits the doctors office and slams the door behind her. Both Stuart and Hector look at each other.

INT. PSYCIATRIC HOSPITAL - EVENING

Brad is laying down on a table and a nurse is adjusting the appropriate equipment so that electroconvulsive therapy can be performed. Brad looks her in the eyes.

BRAD

His won. The shock from this will cause my soul to exit from my body. In moments he will rule the mortal world and I will be a mere shadow of a shadow.

Brad closes his eyes and he is given the procedure.

INT. PSYCIATRIC HOSPITAL LOUNGE ROOM - MORNING

Brad is sitting with his head between his legs. Anton is next to him on a chair with his hand on his shoulder. Brad raises his head and looks at Anton and smiles.

ANTON

How you feeling buddy?

BRAD

I can't play this game.

Sarah walks towards them with a soft drink in her hand. It has a straw in it and she passes it to Brad.

SARAH

Here you go Brad. Everything is going to be OK.

ANTON

You ready to come home man?

BRAD

Yeah.

They all walk out the hospital. Stuart is sitting with two patients who are not very unwell and is playing a board game that requires three dice. He makes eye contact with a female patient on his left.

STUART

So Mary. You seem to be winning. Lets see if we can change that.

Stuart shakes the dice in his hand and rolls them on the table. All three dice land on the number six. He smiles at her and she is frightened.

END.