

SHORTLISTED

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - DAWN

The dim sunlight reveals beautiful houses, immaculate lawns, and spacious streets.

BRANT (25), thin and wiry but strong and sharp, hides behind a tree that's better groomed than him. He scans the area for possible eyewitnesses.

By the next block, a BLONDE in bikini strolls by holding a surfboard. She turns toward Brant. He takes cover behind the tree trunk. Waits for a while. Takes a peek. She is gone.

He darts across the street toward the opposite house.

He double-checks for any onlookers. Puts a little figurine of a dog on a window sill, then taps on the glass.

He sprints back toward the tree to hole up. He watches and waits with bated breath, smiling.

He waits some more with a weaker smile and a slower breath.

He holds his breath and drops the smile.

Tiny hands push against the glass and open the window. EMILY (4) picks the dog figurine up. She studies it, then smiles.

A HAND yanks Emily back into the darkness. Then the darkness spits the dog figurine out onto the lawn.

Brant hides behind the tree. His lip quivers as different emotions fight for a position. A smile comes out triumphant.

His phone CHIRPS. A new message says:

"You've been shortlisted for a job interview."

EXT. COMPANY BUILDING - DAY

Well-groomed, clean shirt, Brant looks ready to kick ass.

He studies the building. It's the only one in the whole area. It looks abandoned. He confirms the address on his phone.

TWO COPS come out of the building holding a SUSPECT between them. They shove him into their cruiser and peel off.

Brant follows them with his eyes. He clears his throat.

INT. RECEPTION - DAY

Brant steps into the empty, still under-construction office. DRILLING, HAMMERING, and SAWING sounds assault his ears.

A RECEPTIONIST (25), tall and athletic, shows up.

B/W CCTV CAMERA P.O.V (M.O.S.)

They confer a little, then Brant presents his ID. She checks a ledger on her desk, then ushers him into the next room.

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

Brant sits alone on a chair, reading something off his phone:

***JOB REQUIREMENTS:** - No education required - Flexible and a fast learner - Ability to work under rough conditions - Very Observant and quick to think on his feet/- A fast runner. - Fearless when the situation demands it.*

INT. WAITING ROOM - LATER

Brant leans back and undoes the upper button of his shirt. He wipes the sweat off his forehead with a handkerchief. He checks his watch. Bites his tongue, thinking.

INT. WAITING ROOM - LATER STILL

Brant sweats like a pig in the brutal heat. He glares at the inept AC unit. He gets up and steps out into --

INT. RECEPTION - CONTINUOUS - B/W CCTV CAMERA P.O.V. (M.O.S.)

Brant talks to the Receptionist. She checks her drawers, shakes her head, then shrugs. Brant thanks her.

INT. WAITING ROOM - LATER

Brant takes a chair and puts it under the AC unit. He climbs it and fumbles for the remote on top of the unit.

He finds something: a brown paper bag. He feels it. His eyes widen. He climbs down. Blocks the door with his foot.

He opens the bag. Claps it shut as if it has got a serpent inside. His pupils dart left and right: decisions, decisions.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Curtains drawn shut, Brant sits on the bed and empties the paper bag's contents. It spits money rolls and cocaine bags.

He inspects the rolls. All hundreds. He grins: jackpot.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - LATER

BANG!

Brant's eyes open. He lifts his head. Was the bang from outside or from a dream? It's nothing. Back to sleep.

EXT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Under the moonlight, a shadow of a MAN picks Brant's lock. *It's the suspect from the company building-- DOMINIQUE.*

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Brant rolls out of bed. Dressed only in shorts, he shuffles to the bathroom, pauses, then returns to pick up his phone off the nightstand where his treasure is scattered.

He stares at them, then at the door. He collects everything.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Brant pushes the light switch a couple of times. No dice. He shakes his head. He splashes water on his sweaty face and neck. Then uses his phone as a flashlight to take a leak.

CHURRRRRRRN!

O.S. The motel room door CREAKS open.

Brant promptly holds it to mute the noisy urine waterfall. He locks his phone. A beam of light stabs the darkness.

O.S. Dominique OPENS drawers, FLIPS the mattress, PEELS the sheets.

Brant's face contorts. He can't hold it any longer. He finishes it inside his shorts. Urine runs down his legs.

The beam of light focuses on the bathroom, almost touching Brant's back. The floor boards SQUEAK under Dominique's footsteps. Brant tenses up. His eyes widen in horror.

A dog BARKS outside. The beam of light turns away.

Brant bolts out of the bathroom like a shell out of a canon --

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

-- knocking Dominique on his ass. Brant hears a RATTLE of a metallic object hitting the floor but never stops to inspect.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Brant runs fast enough for the Olympic's gold for hundred meters. Dominique bursts out of the room running for silver.

A fence guards an open area. Brant climbs it like a monkey.

Bangbangbangbang!

Gunshots chase after Brant but he is over the fence already.

EXT. CITY OUTSKIRTS - ROAD - NIGHT

Exhausted, Brant slows down to look behind him.

The moonlight shines on the clear asphalt. No one in sight.

Brant grabs his knees and catches his breath.

A car comes from the opposite direction. Brant keeps his eyes on it. Soon enough, the car's headlights reveal Dominique riding a motorcycle with its lights turned off. Brant panics.

He turns left and right, then runs off the road and down the hill. A lone house looms in the distance. The clouds gather.

EXT. HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

The clouds cover the moon rendering the night pitch black.

Brant climbs the backyard fence. Tiptoes his way through it.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SAME HOUSE

A MAN yanks a pull-cord of a generator. Third time the charm.

BACK TO THE BACKYARD

The lights turn on and Brant finds himself an invited guest of a *pool party of HUGE, TATTOOED MEN and their GIRLS.*

They all stare at him in a silent demand for an explanation.

Brant puts his hand inside his pocket. Every MAN reacts and pulls a gun. Brant takes it easy.

Slowly, he raises his hand, holding cocaine bags up.

A moment... then everyone CHEERS and ROARS in excitement.

LATER

Brant sits on the poolside amid the crazed party when his phone CHIRPS. A new text message threatens:

"I know where you live."

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Out of breath and disheveled, Brant arrives to find the door of Emily's house open. He takes one step forward, shaking from head to toe. Fear pins his feet to the grass.

Tears stream down his cheek. He falls down to his knees. He clutches the grass with his hands, frustrated with his cowardice. Then he pulls out his phone and makes a call.

A light shines from Emily's bedroom window outlining the shadow of Dominique holding a phone against the glass.

Brant sees it and hangs up. Tears and snot dry on his numb face. He takes a step back. Then another. Yet another.

He runs away.

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Dominique lowers the phone. He looks disappointed. He turns to watch Emily sound asleep in her comfy bed. He observes the undisturbed angel. He steps toward her when --

-- *Brant comes CRASHING through the window*, screaming like a madman. He lands on his knees, then dives for Dominique.

He swings at him but Dominique dodges each of his punches like freaking Mohammed Ali, then he headbutts him.

LIGHTS OUT:

INT. EMILY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (M.O.S.)

Still groggy, Brant wakes up to find himself still on the bedroom floor. A COP, TOM, picks him up, then cuffs him.

EMILY'S MOTHER talks to ANOTHER COP in a frenetic manner, holding a baseball bat. Emily hides behind her leg. Brant looks at her. She hides her face. Her reaction kills him.

They are the same cops who arrested Dominique earlier.

Tom frisks Brant's shorts. *Just his phone.* He wrinkles his nose because of the urine stink. Brant looks humiliated.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - DAWN

Brant leans back and watches the city lights pass by along with his future.

They arrive at the precinct. Brant closes his eyes.

But they keep driving on.

Brant raises his eyebrows, beyond bewildered.

The cops laugh their asses off at Brant's silly face.

EXT. CITY OUTSKIRTS - ROAD - DAY

The cruiser pulls over. Tom takes Brant out of the car. The moment Brant gets his feet on the ground he runs for it.

He turns back to see if the cops are chasing him and he finds them laughing again while unbuttoning their shirts.

BAM!

Brant runs into Dominique. He holds Brant by the shoulders.

Tom tosses the cuffs keys to none other than --

-- The Receptionist from the interview. She uncuffs him. He just gawks at her. Dominique hands him his phone which, as if on cue, CHIRPS. A message explains to Brant:

"You are hired."

THE END