

THE CLEAVERS

Written By
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FADE IN:

DARKNESS:

MARTIN (VO)

Left all my anger on their skin, plain sight. They weren't fighters, weren't able to comprehend. They sat alone in the wet darkness. All dreams faded away, nothing left to hold onto. Embrace the knife, embrace me.

Silence.

LUCIA (VO)

That was fucking beautiful.

FADE IN:

INT. DINING ROOM.

MARTIN and LUCIA CLEAVER sit at the table. They eat quietly, never looking at one another until -

LUCIA

I put a lot of time and hard work into this dinner. Aren't you going to say anything at all?

Martin looks up. Takes a bite.

MARTIN

Marvelous dinner, sweet heart.

Lucia sighs. She looks across the table to Martin.

MARTIN

Not the response you were hoping for?

LUCIA

It would have been nice without the condescending tone.

Martin chuckles to himself.

LUCIA

Great. Now my feelings are not important to you.

Martin smiles at her.

MARTIN

No. No. Your feelings are the most important thing in my life.

Martin drops the fork to the plate.

MARTIN

I'm finished. I'm going to bed.

LUCIA

Why do you have to insist on being so insubordinate?

MARTIN

I didn't know there were set rules in this house.

He stands from the table.

LUCIA

There aren't set rules just set morals. It would be polite to at least finish the meal.

MARTIN

I'm full.

Martin leaves the room.

Lucia lifts her wine glass. Takes a short sip. Downs the entire glass.

She stands from the table and gathers the dishes.

INT. KITCHEN.

Lucia rounds the corner and drops the dishes in the sink. She looks over -

A YOUNG GIRL - beaten, bloody and gagged - is tied up in the corner.

LUCIA

Did you hear that? No respect for me or anything I do for him.

The girl cries. She backs into the corner until she is firmly against the wall.

LUCIA

I have come to the conclusion that all men are bottom feeders. You think so?

Lucia laughs to herself. She kneels down to the young girl.

LUCIA

I forgot. You can't talk with this in your mouth.

She pulls the gag out.

GIRL

What do you want?

LUCIA

That doesn't answer my question. Do you think men are scum?

GIRL

Please. Let me go.

Lucia looks away. Shakes her head.

LUCIA

I try to be nice to you and you disrespect me. Once again, being ignored.

Lucia shoves the gag back in her mouth and stands up. She reaches into a pot on the stove and pulls out some meat. She throws it at the girl.

LUCIA

Have some dinner.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Martin rests on the bed. Writing in a journal. He hasn't taken his shoes off.

Lucia walks in.

LUCIA

Get your shoes off the comforter.

Martin looks over the book. He begins to shake his feet. The shoes hit the floor.

LUCIA

Thank you.

(beat)

Could you put the girl downstairs?

MARTIN

Why don't you?

LUCIA

I brought them up.

MARTIN

So?

LUCIA

Martin! I had to drag two people up the stairs. Kicking and screaming the whole way. Then I had to cook. I'm tired.

MARTIN

You didn't have to bring both. We only needed one for dinner.

LUCIA

Please do not be so uncooperative.

Martin sighs.

MARTIN

Fine. I will in a moment.

LUCIA

And don't kill her. I want to keep her for awhile.

MARTIN

Why?

LUCIA

Does it matter. Just don't kill her.

MARTIN

Fine. I won't. But I get the next one then. You got the boy this time.

LUCIA

Whatever.

Lucia opens a dresser drawer. She pulls out a nightgown. She starts to leave the room -

MARTIN

Not coming to bed?

LUCIA

I'm going to get a drink and watch television.

MARTIN

Of course.

LUCIA

Fuck you.

She leaves the room.

MARTIN

(quiet)

Bitch.

INT. BATHROOM.

Lucia, now in the nightgown, sits on the toilet. A silver tray rests on her legs.

She quietly crushes a small pill and rakes it onto a spoon.

A dropper dispenses water into the spoon. A lighter melts the crushed pill. A syringe sucks up the fluid.

MARTIN (VO)

She is a haunted vessel, begging to be exorcised. Her life force controlled by someone else's device. Her soul once resembled a place where angels sang. Now it only resembles a heart shaped infection.

Lucia sits the tray on the floor. She pulls her nightgown up and spreads her legs. She injects the fluid into her inner thigh.

INT. BASEMENT.

Martin, standing on a ladder, ties the rope around a corkscrew sticking from the ceiling.

He steps off the ladder. Kneels down to the tied up girl. Checks the rope around her neck. It's tight. He runs his hand across her bruised face.

MARTIN

You're pretty. You know that?

She clenches her eyes shut. Cries.

MARTIN

Don't cry. I'm not going to hurt you.

He runs a hand through her hair.

MARTIN

I think we're going to keep you around. For a little while at least.

The girl opens her eyes. She looks into his. Shakes her head.

MARTIN

Besides, your boyfriend had enough meat on him to take us through the winter.

Her eyes grow wide. She screams through the gag.

Martin laughs.

MARTIN

No matter how much you beg and cry, I am not going to let you go. You might as well just give it up.

He shoves her head backward. She falls back onto the floor.

Martin massages his crotch.

MARTIN

Christ. You look so good.

INT. KITCHEN.

Lucia leans against the counter. She sips from her glass.

Martin walks in, wiping his hands on his shirt.

MARTIN

I thought you were going to watch television.

LUCIA

In a minute.

He turns on the sink. Washes dirt from his hands.

MARTIN

I wrote a new one. It's called Haunted Vessel. Want to hear it?

LUCIA

Is she tied up good?

Martin's face drops.

MARTIN

Yeah.

LUCIA

You positive?

MARTIN

I said yes, didn't I?

Lucia takes another sip.

MARTIN

I'm thinking of keeping her around
for a little while.

He turns off the water.

LUCIA

For Christ's sake.

He turns to face her.

MARTIN

What?

LUCIA

Do you know how it makes feel every
time you keep one of them?

MARTIN

How?

LUCIA

Like I'm not satisfying you.

Martin pulls a bottle of Vodka from the freezer.

MARTIN

Don't be ridiculous.

He pours some of the alcohol into a small glass.

LUCIA

Don't give me that shit. Fuck. I
know what you do with them when
you think I'm asleep.

MARTIN

I don't do anything!

Lucia throws her glass against the wall.

LUCIA

Don't lie to me!

Martin's eyes widen. He raises a hand to her. Quickly, puts
it back to his side. He leaves the room.

Lucia finishes her drink.

INT. BASEMENT.

The girl fights with the restraints around her wrists. Useless. She pulls at the one around her neck. Useless. She looks up to the corkscrew holding the rope in place.

She gets to her feet. Grips the rope and pulls. It doesn't budge. She tries again. Same results.

Looking around the room, she spots a small hammer resting on a table. The handle barely hanging over the edge.

She extends her arms - reaching.

TO FAR AWAY.

She sits on the floor and slides as far away as the rope will let her. She turns sideways. Extends her foot. She kicks at the hammer.

TO FAR AWAY.

She relaxes back into sitting position.

She SCREAMS through the gag.

INT. LIVING ROOM.

Martin walks into the room. His eyes wide and his lips clenched tightly. He walks over to the television. Knocks all the DVD's to the floor.

Lucia walks into the room.

LUCIA

I want to tell you something.

He turns to face her.

LUCIA (CONT)

The one time that you hit me, will be your last. I will fucking castrate you.

MARTIN

I would never hit you, Lucia.

LUCIA

That's not what it looked like to me.

He sits in the chair.

MARTIN

I have been thinking. Maybe I should go stay with my brother for awhile. Just until -

Lucia has been stung.

LUCIA

You want a divorce?

MARTIN

I didn't say that.

LUCIA

May as well have.

MARTIN

Not a divorce. Just a separation.

LUCIA

You can't leave me here to face this alone. We made this life. This is our life. You can't just runaway from it.

MARTIN

I'm not trying to runaway.

She drinks more of her vodka.

LUCIA (CONT)

The fuck you aren't. What do you call this?

Martin doesn't answer.

MARTIN

This has all just become too much,

Lucia. Sure killing was fun at first.
Back when you were sober enough to enjoy
it with me. But now all you do is drink
and shoot up.

LUCIA

What the hell else am I supposed to
do? Huh? Your not helping me any. All
you do is sit up there and write!

MARTIN

I have to work.

LUCIA

Work? You're an unpublished poet who wishes
he was a screenwriter! You're never going
to make it.

They glare at each other for a moment.

MARTIN

I shouldn't have even said anything.

He leaves the room.

INT. BASEMENT.

The girl still sits on the floor. She looks around the
room.

Really clean and neat. She is the only thing that seems out
of place.

She notices some chipping slate rock on the wall. She
reaches for it. Her hands stop, inches from touching it.

GIRL

(muffled)

Damn it!

She turns around. Raises her feet. She kicks the wall.

THUMP.

She tensions and stops at the sound. She looks up and
around. No one coming.

With one foot, she pounds the wall again. Again. Again. Every time she pulls her foot away from the wall, more blood is smeared.

She cries.

At last, a piece of rock comes free. It hits the floor. She uses her foot to drag the rock within reach - smearing blood along the way.

She grips the rock in her hand. Saws at the rope hanging from the ceiling.

With the rope almost sawn in half, the rock breaks. The pieces are too small to use.

She throw them to the floor.

Tightly, she grips the rope in both hands. She braces her stance with her feet spread and knees bent. She jerks back - hard.

THE ROPE SNAPS. She hits the floor.

INT. BEDROOM.

Lucia sits on the bed. Her head rests in her hands.

Martin steps into the doorway. She looks up at him.

LUCIA

Do you still love me?

MARTIN

Of course.

Lucia laughs to herself.

LUCIA

You say that like I'm supposed to know.

MARTIN

I love you very much. I just don't like arguing all the time.

LUCIA
Than why do we?

MARTIN
I don't know.

Martin sits next to her.

LUCIA
I wonder why I'm here sometimes.

MARTIN
How do you mean?

She looks him in the eyes.

LUCIA
Shit just seems pointless anymore.
I have no purpose.

MARTIN
Would it help if I stopped
kidnapping the girls for awhile?

LUCIA
They're just food. It still pisses
me off but - -

MARTIN
What is it?

LUCIA
I want a baby.

Martin looks down.

MARTIN
Lucia. The doctor said - -

LUCIA
I know what the doctor said. I was
thinking we could use one of them.

MARTIN
What?

LUCIA

You fuck them anyway. Why not let
one of them carry a child for us.

He looks into her eyes.

INT. HALLWAY.

The girl leans against the wall. She is close to the
bedroom door. Listening.

She looks down. Blood as soaked onto the carpet from her
foot. She lifts her foot and hops back a little.

She grips the bottom of her shirt. She pulls, ripping off a
small piece. She ties it around her bloody foot.

The girl drops to her knees. She slyly looks around the
corner. Their backs are to her.

MARTIN (VO)

You sure about this?

LUCIA (VO)

Yeah.

The crawls across the floor - pass the door.

She jumps to her feet. Runs to the front door. She twists
the handle. It's locked. There is a reverse padlock on the
door.

She runs to the window. Pulls back the curtain.

CHAIN FENCING IS NAILED TO THE WINDOW FRAME.

She pulls on the fence. It doesn't budge but makes some
racket.

INT. BEDROOM.

Lucia quiets Martin.

LUCIA

You hear that?

Martin shakes his head.

LUCIA (CONT)

It came from the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM.

The girl stares out the window. Tears well up.

MARTIN (VO)

It was probably nothing.

The girl jumps. She looks to the hallway. Nothing yet.

She pulls the curtain back. Drops to the floor. Slides under a table in the corner.

Martin follows Lucia into the room.

MARTIN

See. Nothing.

LUCIA

But I heard something.

MARTIN

I'm getting a drink.

INT. KITCHEN.

Martin pours some Vodka into his glass.

LUCIA

I want you to check on the girl.

MARTIN

What? Why?

LUCIA

Just do it. Please.

MARTIN

Lucia, even if she got free she couldn't get out.

LUCIA

Please.

INT. BEDROOM.

The girl runs through the doorway.

Martin walks pass the door just as she slides out of the way.

The girl runs to the window. She pulls back the curtain. Chain fence again.

She looks around the room. Her eyes stop on a small box on the desk. She opens it -

A GUN.

INT. KITCHEN.

Lucia rakes the left over food into a Tupperware bowl.

The girl walks in. She points the gun.

GIRL
Open the front door.

Lucia looks up. She jumps.

LUCIA
Jesus Christ!

GIRL
Open the door!

LUCIA
I can't. I don't have the key.

GIRL
Get it!

LUCIA
Okay.

Martin steps behind the girl. He swings a shovel, cracking her in the back of the head. She hits the floor.

LUCIA
Jesus! A shovel?

MARTIN

What was I supposed to do?

LUCIA

Not hit her with a shovel!

MARTIN

She was going to shoot you.

LUCIA

No she wasn't. She needed me to open
the door first.

(beat)

Besides there were no bullets in that
gun. The real gun is hidden. No one
could find it.

MARTIN

Oh.

Lucia gets on the floor. She looks the girl in the face.
The girl's eyes flutter - open, shut... open, shut.

LUCIA

You're not going anywhere. At least
not for ten more months.

FADE OUT:

THE END.