

The Iceman
By
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Based on the short story by Haruki Murakami.

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FADE IN:

INT. SKI LODGE, BAR - DAY

Flames roar in a log fire.

A large, old-fashioned room. Morning sunlight pours through the windows.

A group of four GIRLS, in their early twenties, congregate by the wooden bar. All of them dressed in ski attire.

BETH watches the other three talk but stays silent herself.

MELANIE

...so then he turned around and
told me that he had always had a
thing for me.

The girls giggle as one... Beth catches on and lets out a polite snigger.

MELANIE

I mean, just like that. No warning.
No nothing. Just came out and said
it. I mean, he knew I was with
George but...

Melanie continues to speak but her voice fades out. Beth stares at her lips moving - at her friends' silent laughter...

... her gaze moves beyond her friends - to an odd looking man in the far corner. He sits, motionless, reading... or merely staring at the pages of his book.

ODD LOOKING MAN

This is THE ICEMAN - sharp facial features, a strange blue tint to his skin - like ice - and white specks in his long, unkempt hair that looks like frost. Difficult to age but a guess would be mid-30.

He doesn't move at all, barely seems to breathe.

BETH -

- stares, transfixed.

Melanie stops talking and follows Beth's gaze over her shoulder. She leans into Beth, secretively.

MELANIE

You've never seen an Iceman before,
have you?

Beth briefly glances to her friend then back to the Iceman, shaking her head.

MELANIE

Me neither, but my mother has. She
told me all about them. You should
leave him alone, he could turn you
to ice with just one look.

Beth's eyes widen.

THE ICEMAN -

- as if hearing the conversation, glances across at the
group of girls.

BETH -

- drops her gaze as her cheeks redden.

The Iceman returns to his book.

LATER

The sun low in the sky through the window.

The Iceman sits just as before, reading his book in his
chair.

The girls, flush-faced, walk through the main door in a
chorus of excited talk.

Beth is last to enter, silently.

Her first look is to the Iceman. She half smiles as she sees
him.

The Iceman keeps on reading his book as the girls walk by.
Beth's gaze constantly on him.

INT. SKI LODGE - DAY

The girls are back by the bar. Drinks almost finished.

MELANIE

Well, lets hit the slopes. It looks
a great day for it.

The girls finish their drinks and make to move...

Beth stays still.

BETH

I thought... I thought I might stay
back today, if... if that's okay
with everyone?

The girls share a look, shrugs.

MELANIE

What are you going to do all day?

Beth looks to the chair in the far corner...

The Iceman sits, just as he was the day before.

Beth quickly looks back to her friends.

BETH

Read, maybe. I'm just a little
tired. I think I might have
overdone it yesterday.

Eyes roll. Sighs.

MELANIE

Whatever. See you later.

Beth's gaze moves back to the Iceman. She raises her hand to
her friends in a half-hearted wave.

BETH

Have fun.

Beth bites her bottom lip. Should she?...

ICEMAN

Beth approaches tentatively...

The Iceman doesn't move.

Beth coughs...

Nothing.

Coughs again, louder.

The Iceman looks up. Smiles.

BETH
(returning the smile)
Hi, I'm sorry to bother you. It's
just... you know, I've never...

Beth's cheeks turn a deep scarlet.

ICEMAN
You've never met an Iceman?

Beth smiles warmly - tension eased a little.

BETH
Yeah, I'm sorry. This is so rude.

The Iceman gestures to the seat opposite him.

ICEMAN
Would you like to take a seat?

Beth nods and sits.

Silence...

Beth looks around, perhaps for a topic of conversation...

BETH
Don't you ski?

ICEMAN
No, not really. I prefer just to
sit here and read my book. I like
watching the snow though. It's very
relaxing, don't you think?

Beth nods.

ICEMAN
You're interested in me, aren't
you? You want to know what an
Iceman is.

Beth nods.

The Iceman chuckles softly - small, white clouds of frost
escapes his lips.

ICEMAN

Relax, I won't turn you to ice.

Beth lets out an embarrassed giggle.

ICEMAN

Is that what you really thought,
Beth?

BETH

Well, I don't know. I didn't really
know what to -- wait a minute, I
didn't tell you my name.

ICEMAN

I know, I just kind of knew it. I'm
not really too sure how.

Beth's cheery demeanor turns a little sour.

BETH

What else do you know about me?

ICEMAN

Everything, I guess. I know you're
not having a good time on this
holiday. That you didn't really
want to come at all.

BETH

So, you can read people's minds? Is
that it?

The Iceman looks out of the window. At the endless snow.

ICEMAN

No, it's not like that. I just
know. It's like I'm looking deep
into ice, and when I look at you
like that I can see everything.
It's very clear to me.

The Iceman looks deep into Beth's eyes. There's a sadness in
his pale blue eyes. A loneliness.

Beth gazes back.

BETH

Can you see my future?

ICEMAN

No, ice doesn't have a future. I
don't really have any interest in
it, to be honest with you.

A long silence...

BETH

What about you? You apparently know everything about me, yet you haven't told me a thing about yourself. What's your name? How old are you?

The Iceman lowers his gaze.

ICEMAN

I don't know... It's like I can see everybody else's past, yet I don't have one myself. I know nothing about my childhood, my parents... I don't even know how old I am.

A deep compassion comes into Beth's look.

BETH

You must have a name.

The Iceman meets Beth's gaze. Shakes his head.

BETH

Well, we'll have to change that. I can't very well go around calling you 'The Iceman' all the time, can I?

They share a smile.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Beth and the Iceman sit on a park bench. They talk MOS.

BETH (V.O.)

We spent so long just talking. We never went on typical dates, to places where ordinary people went like the cinema or a restaurant.

The scene around them SPEEDS UP. The daylight gradually fades to night.

BETH (V.O.)

He would never talk about himself, only me. He found me fascinating and, despite not knowing anything about him, I shared his feelings.

The street-lights around them turn on.

They stand, face-to-face, as the scene goes back to NORMAL SPEED. They are alone. They lean in and kiss.

BETH (V.O.)

I loved him. And when I looked into his eyes, I knew he loved me too. That he would love me forever.

They break the kiss. Beth smiles shyly as her cheeks redden.

INT. BETH'S FAMILY HOME - NIGHT

Old-fashioned furnishings and decorations but clean and tidy.

Beth and the Iceman sit on a sofa while her MOTHER (40s) sits opposite them.

MOTHER

This is crazy, Bethany. You hardly know each other!

BETH

We know we love each other. That's all that matters, isn't it?

Beth takes the Iceman's hand and holds it tight.

MOTHER

Bethany, I -- I...

She looks to the floor sheepishly, then up at the Iceman.

MOTHER

Would you mind giving us a few moments please? There's a comfortable chair on the porch.

The Iceman nods then stands up and walks out the front door.

MOTHER

Beth, you have no idea who this man is, what he wants or even where he comes from.

Beth looks out the open front door then back to her mother.

BETH

We've made up our mind, Mother. We're going to get married.

Her mother shakes her head as tears well in her eyes.

MOTHER

If your father was still alive, he
wouldn't let this happen.

BETH

But he isn't, is he? We came here
for your blessing but if we need
to, we'll get married without it.

Her mother stands and walks towards Beth.

MOTHER

I can't let you do it, Beth. If you
marry him then I have no daughter.

Beth stands too. Tears well in her eyes now, angry tears.
She runs out of the house.

EXT. BETH'S FAMILY HOME - NIGHT

The Iceman stands and catches Beth in his open arms. Holds
her.

She looks up to him through streaming tears.

BETH

We have to go.

The Iceman brushes loose strands of hair from her face and
kisses her cheek softly. The tears turn to ice.

ICEMAN

Are you sure this is what you want?

Beth looks over her shoulder as her mother comes to the
door.

MOTHER

Please Bethany, don't break my
heart.

Beth looks back to the Iceman and nods. They hold hands and
walk down the porch steps.

The Iceman glances over his shoulder at Beth's mother and
smiles.

BEGIN MONTAGE - ICEMAN WORKING AND BETH'S BOREDOM

A - The Iceman works bare-chested in a Frozen Meat Facility. Some co-workers watch him, shaking their heads with jealous faces.

B - Beth sits in her empty apartment, reading a book.

C - The Iceman's boss hands out the pay to all the workers. When he gets to The Iceman, the boss' face breaks into a broad smile and he shakes his hand with vigor. Hands over a bulky pay packet.

D - Beth stares at the clock on the wall. Watches the second hand tick-tick-tick away.

E - The clock on the wall of the Frozen Meat Facility shows Seven O'clock. The night sky visible through the windows as The Iceman carries on his work.

END MONTAGE

INT. SMALL APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Beth lies in the Iceman's arms on the couch.

BETH

All I'm saying is I'm bored of just sitting around here all the time. Seeing the same four walls everyday.

The Iceman looks down at her perplexed.

ICEMAN

Aren't you happy with me?

Beth sits up.

BETH

Of course I'm happy with you. It's just I think we need a change. What about a vacation?

ICEMAN

A vacation? Whatever for?

BETH

For fun?

Beth flashes a hopeful smile.

ICEMAN

Well, where would we go?

BETH

The South Pole.

The Iceman's eyes widen as he smiles - you're kidding?

BETH

I've read about it. You can go and stay in an igloo and it'll be so cold you'd love it.

A serious look comes over The Iceman.

ICEMAN

You seriously want to go to the South Pole, Beth?

BETH

More than anything.

He holds the look for several beats... Beth has to break it and look away. There's an intensity in The Iceman's eyes she's never seen before.

ICEMAN

Very well.

Beth watches him as he just goes back to reading his book. A look of uncertainty comes over her.

INT. SMALL APARTMENT, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Beth lies on her back on the bed. The Iceman moves rhythmically on top of her as they make love.

Her eyes close -

EXT. ANTARCTIC SEA - DAY

Flying high above the clear water at high speed...

We plummet down to sea level and come to a stop before a giant iceberg.

Rising back up, to give us a Birdseye view of the iceberg. There is nothing but sea for miles and miles around.

BEDROOM

Beth's mouth opens as she lets out a sigh of ecstasy.

INT. ICEBERG

Spinning. Viewing the endless sea through the walls of the iceberg. It's dizzying... faster.

BEDROOM

Beth cries out.

The Iceman arches his back and closes his eyes. Face to the ceiling.

He looks down at Beth - a wonder in his eyes. She meets his look with a child-like smile.

The Iceman lies behind Beth and wraps his arms around her. Holds her close.

Beth's smile. Her eyes glisten.

EXT. ANTARCTIC SEA - DAY

The iceberg glistens as we back away from it.

INT. SMALL APARTMENT, BEDROOM - DAY

Beth lies under the bed covers.

The Iceman buttons up his shirt, standing by the full length mirror on the wall.

BETH

I've been thinking... The South Pole is going to be very cold, isn't it? Maybe it won't be good for our health?

The Iceman stops what he's doing and turns around to face Beth.

BETH

I know it was my idea, but I --

ICEMAN

-- I'm going to buy the tickets today, Beth.

Beth sits up, keeping the covers wrapped around her.

BETH

Italy's beautiful this time of year. We could tour around Europe?

The Iceman stands silently, brow furrowed in thought as he considers.

ICEMAN

No, Italy will be far too stuffy. Besides, I've already bought you a fur coat and hat. It would be silly to waste them.

BETH

But --

The Iceman sits on the edge of the bed and takes her hand.

ICEMAN

-- But nothing. We've already decided.

He smiles to her and kisses her hand.

EXT. SOUTH-POLE AIRPORT - DAY

A blanket of snow. White skies to match.

A small building in the distance must be the airport. A plane comes to a stop on the runway.

There is a deathly silence, a stillness all around. The slow, monotonous roar of the engines are the only break.

The plane's door opens. Beth and the Iceman emerge, hand-in-hand. They walk down the steps.

As the Iceman's feet hit the ground for the first time a strange look comes over his face. He closes his eyes and leans his head back.

Beth gives him a worried glance.

BETH

Are you okay?

The Iceman smiles to her.

ICEMAN

I think this was a great idea,
Beth. I don't know why we didn't do
it sooner.

He walks off towards the airport leading the increasingly concerned Beth by her hand.

EXT. SOUTH POLE COMMUNITY - DAY

Six large igloos are the only features that break up the snow. They are in a spacious circle. PEOPLE congregate in the middle.

A large man, ISIS, similar in looks to the Iceman, is the only person to stand. He speaks in a strange, unknown language - subtitled into English.

ISIS

We welcome home our Brother and we
are delighted to see he has brought
back a wife.

The Iceman and Beth sit on the snowy ground. The Iceman engrossed in what is said with a beaming smile but Beth's blank face sums up her emotion.

The dozen or so people around them CHEER, all of them similar to the Iceman in looks. Men, women and children.

INT. IGLOO - DAY

Beth sits in a chair by the window, looking out. Tears roll down her cheeks.

THROUGH THE WINDOW

The Iceman stands with Isis in the snow. They are deep in discussion but Beth can't hear a word.

BACK TO SCENE

Beth continues to stare. Her expression a mix of fear and confusion.

The Iceman walks through the door. Beth turns her head to face him.

ICEMAN

Well, we're not going anywhere for
some time.

BETH

What do you mean?

He walks over and squats down by her.

ICEMAN

Look around you, Beth. The winter's
in. No planes are coming until the
spring.

Beth lowers her head into her hands and sobs.

The Iceman watches with a curious smile.

ICEMAN

Why do you cry? Don't you know that
I love you?

Beth looks to him... the tears stream now.

The Iceman leans in and kisses her cheek.

The tears freeze and turn to icicles.

ICEMAN (O.S.)

See how I love you?

The iced tear dissolves to...

INT. BETH

... Beth's frozen heart.

FADE OUT.