

MARSHMALLOW

by

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DARKNESS

The sound of a SPEEDING CAR, then...

EASTON (O.S.)
Trust me baby. It's going to work.
I promise. I'll make it work...

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DUSK

A harvest moon reflects in a high-end SEDAN. The car swerves from lane to lane compromising the exquisite countryside.

EASTON (O.S.)
Listen to me. LISTEN. This is what
you wanted. Not my idea, my,
execution...

INT. SEDAN

Our pilot is EASTON, late thirties, decent hair, better suit. He talks on a HEADSET. It's connected to a CELLPHONE that rests on the dash.

He reaches shotgun to a half-full bottle of EXPENSIVE WINE.

EASTON
(headset)
You, not me. What?.. WHAT? Yes... I
know. I KNOW... Fine... I don't
know... Any minute now STACY, I
don't FINE. FINE... You'll know
when I... No. YOU'LL KNOW, IT'LL BE
PRETTY FUCKING...

Easton floors it.

EASTON (CONT'D)
...OBVIOUS.

German engineering takes the car to one hundred.

Gravity sends the bottle just out of reach.

Desire unhooks the safety belt, reaches for the wine.

Inertia jets the car to the shoulder, disconnects the cell.

Tragedy sends the phone out the window.

EASTON (CONT'D)
Shit.

EXT. SEDAN

The car swerves back to the road, saved from a murky grave.
If only the phone was so lucky.

INT. SEDAN

Easton discards his headset with a sigh of relief, then
shakes off the near death experience with a healthy drink.

He activates the radio, LILITH FAIR BLARES. He ejects the
disk, tosses it out the window, then inserts another - JAZZ.

EXT. SEDAN

Luxury hauls ass through the countryside. Then it doesn't.
Eighty thousand dollars slows to a halt, tries to start back
up, gains a few yards, then stalls out again.

INT. SEDAN

Easton pumps the accelerator, glances at the instrument
panel...

INSTRUMENT PANEL: NO FUEL

EASTON

Damn it.

EXT. DESERTED HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Solitude, save for the chirping CRICKETS or the distant glare
of a LIGHTNING BUG. Easton sits on the hood waiting for
rescue. He's out of his element, but doesn't break a sweat.
He just sits there, perched on his imported throne, smoking.

A LIGHT appears in the distance.

Closer now - HEADLIGHTS.

A beat-up PICKUP TRUCK approaches, driven by a dirty FARMER.

Easton flicks his cigarette, it lands in a nebula of
lightning bugs. He raises his hand to the farmer, about to
flag him down.

The farmer glances at Easton, sizes him up, then spits a
brown stream of chew in Easton's direction.

Easton lowers his hand as the farmer drives on.

EXT. DESERTED HIGHWAY - LATER

Sultry LOUNGE MUSIC. The orange moon illuminates the sky.

Easton sits in the passenger seat, a good dent in the bottle of wine.

His headlights FLICKER on rows of corn as the music FLUTTERS. Both fade to nothing.

INSTRUMENT PANEL: DEAD BATTERY

Easton barely notices.

In the distance, the sound of a motor REVVING.

Closer now, a red MG SPORTS CAR approaches. It hauls ass.

Easton rises, tries to flag it down.

It blows past.

He sinks back into the seat. Lights another smoke.

The MG reverses into frame. It's driven by ANNA, early thirties, hot, intellectual - fashion editor beautiful. A DOCTOR'S BAG sits in the passenger seat.

ANNA

You look like you could use some help.

Easton checks her out - no ring.

EASTON

I think the fuel gauge must be broken or something.

ANNA

Really?

EASTON

You're the first car I've seen in hours.

She notices the bottle.

ANNA

That's not a Malbec is it...
promise not to tell... I'm Anna.

He offers her the bottle.

EASTON

Easton.

ANNA

Easton? Like the bat?

EASTON

Oh, ah, my father was a player...

ANNA

Your father was a player... not you?

EASTON

No, just my pops.

ANNA

Interesting... Triple A?

She smells the bottle, then sips.

EASTON

No, majors... Well, then he bought a team.

ANNA

I mean did you call Triple A?

EASTON

Lost my phone.

ANNA

How did you manage that?

EASTON

It flew off the dashboard.

ANNA

Really?

EASTON

It's been one of those days.

ANNA

Let me...

She grabs her cell, glances at the screen.

ANNA (CONT'D)

No signal.

She returns the bottle.

EASTON
Thanks.

ANNA
Baseball huh?

EASTON
Baseball.

A beat, then...

ANNA
Are you heading someplace
important?

EASTON
Yeah, no... sort of not really.

ANNA
A girl then?

EASTON
No it's... What brings you out
here?

Anna smiles, but does not answer. Easton tries to smile back.

EASTON (CONT'D)
Could you drop me at a gas station
or something?

She looks him over.

ANNA
Can I trust you?

Hesitation.

EASTON
A guy with a ride like this?

ANNA
A guy who runs out of gas in the
middle of nowhere...

He shrugs, she hesitates, then motions him in.

ANNA (CONT'D)
Just let me...

Curious, Easton stares at the doctor's bag as she grabs it
and throws it in back.

SUBLIMINAL FLASH FRAME: The contents of the bag.

Anna motions toward the bottle.

ANNA (CONT'D)
We might need that.

Easton turns and grabs the bottle. He notices his WEDDING RING, subtly slips it off, then hides it in the ashtray.

I/E. MG - MOVING

Anna drives with the bottle between her legs.

She turns on the radio. It's CHICK MUSIC. She turns it up. Easton tries to hide his distaste.

ANNA
What kind of music are you into,
Easton?

He turns off the radio.

EASTON
Do you hear that, what are those
crickets? Or what do you call em,
cicadas?

She smiles.

ANNA
You know, if we don't find a gas
station soon we could head back and
pour the rest of this swill into
the gas tank.

She takes a petite swig. Easton reaches for the bottle.

EASTON
This cost a hundred and seventy
five dollars.

Anna cracks up. Easton doesn't.

A beat.

EASTON (CONT'D)
So really, what brings you out
here, business?

ANNA
Business, yeah, business... I'm a
doctor, I do house calls.

EASTON
I didn't know doctors still did
that.

She doesn't answer, instead fiddles with the cigarette
lighter.

ANNA
There are all kinds of doctors...
What about you, Mr. Easton.

EASTON
Easton's my first name actually.
I'm in insurance. Claims really.
I'm out here investigating claims.

ANNA
Isn't that interesting. Claims.

She grabs the bottle, slams a good quarter, then shivers.

ANNA (CONT'D)
I love this, what year is it,
ninety nine?

EASTON
It's ah...

ANNA
We should get another bottle.

I/E. DESERTED HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Orange construction PYLONS FLASH on the roadside.

EASTON
So what's it like being a doctor,
making house calls in the country?

She smiles, keeps her eyes on the road.

EASTON (CONT'D)
Come on. Humor me.

ANNA
Ah, I'm fairly new at it.

EASTON
(teasing)
So... do you occasionally meet the
strapping young farm lad, or is it
all pigs and cows with tummy aches?

ANNA

I'm not a vet and actually I spend most of my time out here alone...

She smiles at him.

ANNA (CONT'D)

...but it is nice to have company I can honestly relate to.

That registers with Easton.

EASTON

Yeah, I know what you mean... So, ah, is there anyone waiting back home?

ANNA

Used to be... but we kind of lost that spark... you know what I... is that, finally, a gas station.

They pull to a PLAZA at the freeway entrance.

A sign at the gas stations reads: CLOSED.

A motel sign flashes: VACANCY.

The strangers make eye contact. Anna breaks, grabs the bottle, shakes it.

ANNA (CONT'D)

Cars aren't the only thing running on empty...

She hands the bottle to Easton.

ANNA (CONT'D)

...I don't think there's another station for miles, we might not make it.

EASTON

We could always call it a night...

She doesn't respond.

EASTON (CONT'D)

...and huff the rest of the tank. I hear BP is a pretty good vintage...

She cracks up.

EASTON (CONT'D)
You're making fun of me.

ANNA
You're not in any hurry are you?
Why don't we see if they have a
mini-bar.

Easton is pleasantly dumbfounded.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

A classic fifties motor lodge, neon sign and the whole bit.
Anna walks from reception to the MG.

ANNA
Good news, they do have a mini-bar.

EASTON
Bad news?

ANNA
Mini-bar. Only one vacancy.

She dangles the key, teasing.

ANNA (CONT'D)
You better hope the sofa's comfy.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Easton scopes out the tacky décor, then sits on the bed. Anna places the doctor's bag next to the bureau, then opens the mini-bar. She selects a miniature bottle of CHAMPAGNE.

ANNA
(teasing)
Only one little bottle.

EASTON
You can have it.

ANNA
Let's share.

She fiddles with the cork. It pops prematurely, shoots across the room and nails Easton in the eye.

ANNA (CONT'D)
Oh my god, are you OK? Can you see?

EASTON
I think I'm fine.

ANNA
How many fingers am I holding up?

EASTON
Two... three.

ANNA
I better have a look at that. I'm a
doctor you know.

He sits on the edge of the bed. She moves to him and stands between his legs, her chest close to his face. She bends further and stares into his eyes.

ANNA (CONT'D)
It looks fine, but I better do a
thorough examination.

She slowly undoes his shirt, seductively running her fingers on his chest. They breathe heavily, close, but neither seals the deal.

ANNA (CONT'D)
Lucky I brought my medical bag...

She moves to the bureau, looks at him in the MIRROR. He's mesmerized by her perfection. She digs it. No more games. She unbuttons her shirt.

He embraces her from behind. It's hot and heavy, like they've been waiting a lifetime for this.

She's aggressive, throws him on a chair. Panting, he tries to get up.

ANNA (CONT'D)
Down.

He obeys.

ANNA (CONT'D)
Tell me about your claims.

EASTON
What?

She pulls his hands behind the chair, then reaches into her bag. She grabs a pair of FEATHERED HANDCUFFS - he wasn't expecting that.

ANNA
Claims.

EASTON
I claim you all for myself.

ANNA
(forceful)
CLAIMS. AS IN THE TRUTH. What do
you claim as the truth?

EASTON
The what?

She cuffs him to the chair.

EASTON (CONT'D)
What are you doing baby!

ANNA
My name's Anna.

EASTON
OK, OK, you're Anna!

From her bag, she pulls out a RIDING CROP.

EASTON (CONT'D)
WHAT THE FUCK!

ANNA
OK, Easton is it? I want the truth!

She winds up and whacks him on the cheek.

EASTON
The truth?

ANNA
Do you like that? Huh Easton?
Easton not like the bat?

She winds up again, delivers another line drive to his face.

EASTON
OK. OK, STOP IT.

ANNA
Yeah, you think it's that easy?

EASTON
Baby stop, you're taking it...

SLOW MOTION: Anna is about to inflict serious harm.

EASTON (CONT'D)
 ...MARSHMALLOW!

She hesitates.

ANNA
 What?

EASTON
 MARSHMALLOW MARSHMALLOW
 MARSHMALLOW!!!

ANNA
 That's not going to help you now.

EASTON
 GOD DAMN IT STACY, I SAID THE SAFE
 WORD.

ANNA
 STACY? You wanna talk to Stacy? She
 left these with me...

Anna/STACY reaches into the bag. She pulls out a stack of
 PICTURES.

ANNA (CONT'D)
 Feeling *safe* now?

EASTON
 Come on damn it!

STACY
 You say marshmallow, marshmallow
 blah, blah, blah, but all I hear is
 FUCK YOU STACY, FUCK YOU STACY,
 FUCK YOU STACY... And you know
 what, FUCK YOU SHANE! FUCK YOU
 SHANE! FUCK YOU SHANE! FUCK YOU AND
 YOUR LITTLE FUCKING GAMES!

She throws the pictures at Easton/SHANE - we never see what
 they are.

SHANE
 Baby, you said we need this...

STACY
 My name's Stacy!

SHANE
 OK, Stacy! This, this game was your
 idea! This is what you want...

STACY

This? These pictures? That's what you think? THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK?!.

She pulls a RETRACTABLE POLICE BATON from the bag, extends it. She swings it like a pro.

SHANE

Please baby, don't...

He drags the chair into the corner, retreating the best he can.

SHANE (CONT'D)

I thought the game would be good for us.

STACY

Let's play a new game, you like baseball don't you?

SHANE

Please. Don't. I can explain.

STACY

You can explain? You can explain the pictures?

SHANE

But that was all part of...

STACY

(interrupting)
...you like to role play don't you marshmallow? Don't you? DON'T YOU?

SHANE

Please.

STACY

I know you're going to like this game, it's all we talk about.

EASTON

That's not true, I, I, we talk about lots of stuff...

ANNA

Lots of stuff? Like how we need to spice things up? Like how we start to get hot and then you disappear for hours to watch the game.

EASTON
I'm sorry I didn't think.

ANNA
You didn't think.

She moves a little closer, threatens him with the baton.

ANNA (CONT'D)
Here's how we're gonna play. I'm
going to be the batter and do you
know who you're going to be? Who
that cute little grin on your face
is going to be?...

She steps up to the plate...

FIN