

THE TERMINAL

BY C.A. BOONE

EXT. 12TH & FILBERT-READING TERMINAL MARKET-NIGHT

The streets are quiet. Deserted. A BIG RED NEON SIGN hangs on a historical stone facade that reads "READING TERMINAL MARKET". The sign FLICKERS. We pan over to glass doors and ZOOM IN.

INT. READING TERMINAL-NIGHT

The Terminal is filled with a multitude of vendors and restaurants usually busy during the day, but now silent. The over head lights and signs lighting the way to the empty restaurants and vendors are still on.

We ZOOM through the terminal and into the lady's room located on the Northwest side of the Terminal.

INT. READING TERMINAL-LADY'S ROOM-NIGHT

We stop just inside a stall where a WOMAN dressed in a short LEOPARD PRINT DRESS is unconscious, sprawled within the stall; bottom still on the toilet seat, head at an odd angle against the stall wall, her panties around her ankles, long stilettos under them, one hand with a diamond ring reaching out towards a clutch purse that has slipped from it.

She is a beautiful young woman, late twenties. THE CAMERA pauses on her face distorted with discomfort.

Suddenly, she awakes; her torso jumping forward as she rapidly takes DEEP BREATHES. She looks around at the enclosed walls of the stall. An expression of shock mixed with confusion sets on her face. She quickly goes for the tissue, unraveling it.

Outside the stall, we hear the TOILET FLUSH. The Woman walks out and to the sink. She looks in the mirror, checking her head for what might be bruises. She places her purse on the counter, taking out her cell phone. There is no signal. The time reads 12 am.

INT. READING TERMINAL-NIGHT

The CAMERA CRANES through the empty Terminal once again, coming to rest on a pair of GUYS knocked out at a table in the seating area next to the restaurant BEER GARDEN.

One is face down, arm stretched across the table. The other's head is laid sideways, so that we can partially make out his face.

CONTINUED

Each has a mug of beer in front of him. One has been knocked over, spilling onto the table and the floor below. An assortment of soaked tourism pamphlets and maps lie on the table.

The face down guy (mid-thirties) JUMPS, sitting up. He takes air into his lungs with huge GASPS. He looks at his arm that was out stretched. His jacket sleeve is soaked in the beer of his partner that has been knocked over.

The Guy GROANS, reaching a hand to his head. He shakes the guy across from him (late-twenties).

GUY
(groggy)
Jimmy, Jimmy wake up.

Jimmy stirs and lifts his head, eyes half shut against the light.

JIMMY
Where are we?

GUY
The Terminal.

A confused expression crosses Jimmy's face.

INT. READING TERMINAL-BASSET'S EXIT-NIGHT

The two men stand in front of the exit next to BASSET'S ICREAM. The Guy presses numerous times against the bar that opens the door. It does not open.

GUY
We're locked in. We might have to wait until morning.

Jimmy looks at his watch. Both hands are stuck on 12. The second hand has stopped.

GUY
What the...

Jimmy looks up from his watch and follows the Guy's eyes to what he is looking at outside. Across the street are a few people enjoying the late night atmosphere, except-- they are not moving. They are frozen in mid-stride, mid-speech, mid-smile.

The two men look at each other.

CONTINUED

JIMMY

What the fuck is going on, Aaron?

Aaron shakes his head.

WOMAN

Hello!

A voice calls from somewhere in the Market.

WOMAN (Cont'd)

Hello!?

Aaron and Jimmy follow the voice.

View of a Young Woman, around 18, wearing a BASSET'S ICE CREAM shirt and a nametag that reads CHERYL.

CHERYL

Hello!

She walks down the vacant Terminal pass TERMINI BROTHER'S BAKERY towards the 12th and Filbert Street exit.

CHERYL (Cont'd)

Is anyone...AHHHH!

Cheryl jumps as she almost bumps into Aaron and Jimmy coming around the corner.

AARON

It's ok. It's ok.

CHERYL

You scared me!

AARON

Sorry, we heard you call.

CHERYL

Did you wake up here too?

AARON

Yeah, we both did.

Jimmy notices Cheryl's name tag.

JIMMY

You work here?

CHERYL

Yeah, I work at Basset's.

CONTINUED

JIMMY

Do you have a key?

CHERYL

No. Not to the Terminal. I tried a couple of the doors on the other side. They are all locked. I can't believe they just left me in here like this. They didn't come looking for me. They didn't try to wake me.

AARON

No one tried to wake us either. With how busy this Terminal was, someone had to have noticed two guys unconscious at a table.

CHERYL

What do we do now?

AARON

We search the place. Find a way out.

CHERYL

We split up?

AARON

No we stay together.

Jimmy and Cheryl follow Aaron as he walks back around the corner.

INT. READING TERMINAL-JOHN YI FISH MARKET-NIGHT

The Camera DRAWS IN on JOHN YI FISH MARKET. We hear a stirring from behind the glass counter and a HUGE GASP for air. COUGHING. A few seconds later an ASIAN GUY, mid-twenties, pops up. He rubs his chest, GRUNTING from a pain not seen.

He jumps over the counter to the other side.

He looks right and as he lands. As he looks left, a hand quickly comes into frame spraying him in the face with mace. The Asian Guy backs up, blocking the spray with his arms. He swings automatically knocking the mace to the ground.

ASIAN GUY

What the hell are you doing, lady?

The Woman from the bathroom stands there looking at him as he, bent over, wipes the mist from his face.

WOMAN

You just jumped out!

CONTINUED

ASIAN GUY
So you spray me?

WOMAN
I thought you were going to attack
me.

The Asian Guy stands up straight, squinting.

ASIAN GUY
Where'd you come from?

WOMAN
Where you come from?

ASIAN GUY
I just woke up here.

WOMAN
So did I.

The Woman looks up at the sign over the vendor.

WOMAN (Cont'd)
You work here?

ASIAN GUY
No, why?

The Woman shrugs, glancing up at the sign.
The Asian Guy follows her eyes to John Yi Fish Market. The
Asian Guy gives a disappointed look.

ASIAN GUY
That's racist you know. I am not
even Korean.

Jimmy comes around the corner of MARKET BLOOMS. He shouts
back to Aaron and Cheryl.

JIMMY
Hey, there's more people!

Aaron and Cheryl come around the corner after Jimmy as he
moves down the aisle towards the Asian Guy and the Woman.

JIMMY (Cont'd)
What are your names?

WOMAN
Diane.

ASIAN GUY
Rick.
(to Diane)
You surprised by that too?

CONTINUED

Diane rolls her eyes.

JIMMY
I'm Jimmy.

Jimmy gestures to Aaron and Cheryl.

JIMMY (Cont'd)
That's Aaron and Cheryl.

CHERYL
Hey!

DIANE
(snooty)
Hi.

JIMMY
Does anyone remember...how they...

Jimmy holds his head as he stumbles, almost falling over.
Aaron reaches out to steady him.

AARON
You ok?

JIMMY
No, I feel lightheaded.

AARON
Did you take your insulin?

JIMMY
Not since we left the hotel.

Aaron helps steady Jimmy as he lowers him to the floor.

AARON
You bring it with you?

JIMMY
Yeah, it's in my jacket pocket.

Aaron reaches into Jimmy's pocket, pulling out the needle and insulin in a ZIPLOC BAG. He fills the needle. Diane turns her head with a nauseated expression. Jimmy takes the needle.

JIMMY (Cont'd)
I got it.

AARON
You sure?

JIMMY
Yeah.

CONTINUED

Jimmy sticks himself.

DIANE
Must you do that here? There's a
men's room...

AARON
We don't have enough time.
(to Cheryl)
Is there a place in here that
sales cakes, cookies?

CHERYL
Um...Beiler's Bakery all the way in
the back next to the Dutch Eating
Place.

AARON
(to Jimmy)
I am going to get you a cookie.
I'll be right back.

Jimmy nods. Aaron gets up.

DIANE
If he's diabetic why are you giving
him a cookie?

AARON
He hasn't eaten anything since this
afternoon. The insulin's not going
to work if there is nothing for it
to feed off of. He's going to be
hypoglycemic soon. He needs sugar.

AARON
Can you watch him for me, Cheryl?

CHERYL
Yeah, Ok. Sure.

Aaron takes off.

INT. READING TERMINAL-BEILER'S BAKERY-NIGHT

Aaron digs through a tall metal hot box, throwing the empty
trays to the floor. As he does A HUGE DARK SHADOW of a
figure with horns passes by quickly. Aaron grabs a cookie
and hightails it back to the others jumping over the glass
food display cases to the other side.

INT. READING TERMINAL-JOHN YI FISH MARKET-NIGHT

Aaron runs up to Jimmy, still on the floor. He stoops, handing him the cookie.

AARON
Here, eat this.

Jimmy takes the cookie. He looks pale and worst for wear. Aaron brushes back Jimmy's hair, apparently worried as Jimmy slowly eats the cookie.

DIANE
Your boyfriend going to be ok?

AARON
(stern)
He's my brother, thank you very much.

RICK
So, you don't like to think before you speak. Is that your thing?

DIANE
I was just asking a question!

Aaron takes a seat next to Jimmy.

JIMMY
I'll be fine. (beat) So, does anyone remember what they were doing before they blacked out?

CHERYL
I was eating lunch.

JIMMY
And what happened?

CHERYL
A man...

FADE IN TO:

CHERYL'S FLASHBACK--

INT. READING TERMINAL-FLYING MONKEY PATISSERIE-NOON

The Terminal is packed. Streams of people pass by on their way to vendors and restaurants. Cheryl sits in the seating area by the FLYING MONKEY PATISSERIE eating a salad. A newspaper lies beside her on the table.

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CHERYL (V.O)

A man I never met before comes up to me. He tells me the most gruesome tale I ever heard.

A man in his sixties, white hair, olive complexion walks into frame. Although he is of old age he is still vital with virtually no wrinkles.

OLD MAN

(French Accent)

You new here?

Cheryl looks up.

CHERYL

Excuse me?

OLD MAN

Are you new here?

He points to her Basset's t-shirt.

OLD MAN (Cont'd)

You must be. I would have noticed someone as beautiful as you working in the terminal.

Cheryl smiles, blushing slightly.

CHERYL

Yeah, I just started a week ago. And who might you be?

OLD MAN

Lafayette Dambrose. Et Vous?

CHERYL

I'm Cheryl.

LAFAYETTE

Cheryl, would you mind that an old man take a load off. I am not as young as I use to be and working on my feet all day has taken its toll.

Lafayette gestures to the empty seat across from her.

CHERYL

No, please, sit down.

Lafayette pulls the chair out and takes a seat.

CHERYL (Cont'd)

You work in the terminal also?

CONTINUED

LAFAYETTE
Yes, for many years.

Lafayette looks up into space as if he is looking at an imaginary sign. He follows the imaginary arch of the letters with his right hand.

LAFAYETTE (Cont'd)
I work at "You won't believe what you're eating".

CHERYL
And why is it called that?

LAFAYETTE
Cause you won't believe what you're eating. We have the best food in town. You order chicken and you'd say you never had chicken that tasted so good. You'd swear it is something else completely.

CHERYL
Really?

LAFAYETTE
I bring the meat in fresh every morning myself.

CHERYL
I will have to stop by sometime.

LAFAYETTE
You are most welcome in my kitchen.

Cheryl smiles and takes a bite of her salad. She looks at the newspaper lying beside her.

CHERYL
Oh, you see this.

She pushes the paper across the table.

CHERYL (Cont'd)
This couple has gone missing while they were vacationing here in Philly. Isn't that sad?

Lafayette picks up the paper. The couple smiles at him from the front page. He lays the paper back down.

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