

VICTIM NO.1

Written by

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EXT. CHILDHOOD HOME-BACKYARD - DAY

The backdoor slams to a dumpy house, as a BOY, 8, walks into the dusty backyard. Police sirens and arguing is heard, but the boy tunes them out. He plays with a toy car.

He gets distracted. A cat watches him from nearby. The boy stares at it. Bruises. He walks up to it and pets it. Picks it up, and stares at it for a long time. Then he chokes it.

The cat hisses and fights him.
The cat scratches him.
The boy watches the cat die.

The cat is still in the dirt. The boy stands a pace from it, still watching it. He notices the blood from the scratches and wipes it on his pants.

TITLE: Victim No.1

INT. GAS STATION-BACK ROOM - NIGHT

DAVID IS FILMING HIMSELF ON A CAMCORDER

David, 30s, short and plain, cropped hair, muscular, he might be a villain from a comic you've never heard of, sits. Awkward beat. Behind him, a TV displays a security feed.

DAVID

If you're watching this, Then I
will have succeeded. You'll realize
that you've seen me before. A
million times, and forgotten. Just
another... unimportant character in
the background. But...

David searches for words. He opens his mouth but a beep indicates the front door opens. David breaks character and stands as if caught. He looks at the TV, a woman walks up, he walks O.S. David enters the frame of the TV.

MARIA (V.O.)

Hi, prepay on #4.

David takes her cash. Beat. The register opens & closes. She never looks at him.

MARIA (V.O.)

I don't need a receipt.

Beat. The front door beeps. Silence. David returns. Sits and stares at the floor for a moment before resuming character.

DAVID

A man that speaks makes more noise
than a thousand that are silent.

INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

David, his shift over, grabs some Pringle's and timidly approaches the cashier, MILA, mid-20's, pink hair, who yawns. Putting a magazine, keys, and pepper spray under the counter.

MILA

More Pringles.

David gives her his snack. MILA takes it, not looking at him.

DAVID

(awkward beat)

Yeah.

David puts money on the counter and takes the snack.

MILA

I like the pizza ones. I could eat
them everyday.

DAVID

What kind of pizza do they taste
like?

MILA

(thinking)

I...I don't know. Just normal
pizza. Cheese pizza.

David nods. He exchanges his Pringle's for the Pizza flavor.

MILA

You'll like it.

DAVID

I just don't like Hawaiian pizza.

MILA

Oh, it's better than Hawaiian
pizza. 2.50-1.50 is your change.

David starts walking away before Mila can get change to him.

DAVID

Yo-you can have it.

MILA
(finally looking at him)
Uh-ok...Bye.

David leaves the light and into the night outside.

EXT. HILL OVERLOOKING TOWN - NIGHT

David stands atop a hill. His face lit by the lights from a nearby town. He finishes his Pringle's. *Where do I put the garbage? Not on the ground...in my pocket.*

He wipes his hands on his pants and lays prone looking down into the town, moving a rock. Looking through binoculars he looks at a house near the edge of town. He looks around town. It is dead still. Save one car that parks at the house.

Maria exits the car and goes into the house. Light on, her shadow moving inside. David looks at his watch. 4:23am. He pulls out a pad of paper that has a list of times on it. David looks with a hunger at the house. Breathing.

EXT. MARIA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

David thoughtfully approaches a window. He flicks a pocket knife open. Maria moves on the other side of the window. David pauses. Stares. His hand shakes, he grips the knife. Beat. David cracks the window open with his knife.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE: Maria Goncalves

I/E. MARIA'S CAR - NIGHT

Maria's car is at a quarter tank. She is driving drowsy. She composes herself, rolling down the window and turning up the Mexican talk radio.

EXT. MARIA'S HOUSE - LATER

Maria shuts the door to her car and walks towards the front door carrying a grocery bag. She drops her keys. *Porque?* She picks them up, unlocks the door and enters...

INT. MARIA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

She sighs, *I'm home*. Keys drop into a bowl. The place is small and clean, bare. She puts the bag on the counter and removes two cans of beans, a bag of rice, and cola. They go into empty cupboards. She fills a cup of water and drinks.

Maria walks into her bedroom. The window is shut. She pulls \$100 in bills out of her pocket and then lifts her mattress. The money is added to a small amount already hidden there.

She looks behind her, then nothing. She yawns and walks back into the kitchen, deposits her empty cup in the sink, and reenters the room.

The window is open.

At first she doesn't notice. Double take. Beat. Shrug. She closes it.

Her room is empty. Unabashed, she begins to undress. Shirt, folded, put in a dresser. Cheap Bra, in the drawer. Maria steps out of her shoes.

In the bathroom, she stares at herself. Cleans her face.

Then stares at herself again. *Am I beautiful?*

She examines her eyebrows with her finger. Yawns. Then, uses a toothbrush.

Behind her, the Pringle's bottle sits next to her dresser.

Maria gently rubs at small blemish on her neck then a click! A heater turns on in her room. Maria was slightly startled. She goes to her bed. A rosary. An old photograph of her mom.

She turns off the light and lays down. The clock reads 4:47.

THE CAMCORDER RECORDS MARIA SLEEPING FROM THE DRESSER.

The clock reads 5:31. At first there is no movement. Then, slowly, a shadow, David, covers the dim light from a window.

The knife.
Breathing.

Click, the heater.

Maria sleeps.
The knife quivers.

A sliver of light grows in the room, a new shadow appears.
David hides.

A child enters the room. Maria stirs, sees the child, then
opens her sheets. The door shuts. The child gets in with her.

Silence.
Stillness.

David moves ever so slightly.
Slowly.
Slowly towards them. Closer. Then pauses.

The knife.

The child.

David's face.

The heater.
Sweat on David's face.

CUT TO:

INT. MARIA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Maria opens her eyes with a start. There's a strange sound.
The blinds are tapping against an open window. She gets out
of bed and shuts the window. *I thought I closed that?*

I/E. DAVID'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

David walks up, defeated, to his car. He unlocks the car and
opens the door.
Beat. He slams the door.
Opens it, slams it,
opens it, slams it.
He screams at the night!

Later.

David drives silently. The rustles of the old car.
He pulls up to the gas station. He turns off the engine.
He stares at nothing.
Eventually, he reaches for the camcorder. Takes out the tape
and exits the vehicle.

David takes the camcorder to a trash can. Before he puts it
in he looks at Mila through the window. She is reading.

He turns, keeps the camcorder. Then looks at her again.
He walks back to his car.

He sits, engine running. Beat. He looks at Mila again, shakes his head.

Shifts into Drive.

Beat. Acceptance.

David puts the car into park. Head down. Turns the car off.

Head up. Ready.

INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

Mila finishes a magazine. Sigh. Looks around the gas station, it is dead still. She walks into the backroom, she opens her purse and her cigarettes. The Camcorder sits in the B.G.

A beep indicates the front door opens. Mila pauses, then hastily puts her cigarettes away.
She goes out of the backroom, but no one is in the store.
Beat. *Odd.*

SECURITY FEED OF MILA STANDING. A SHADOW HIDES FROM HER.

Mila shrugs. A gun is held to her face.
She screams.

A THIEF, jittery, looks about, then back on her.

THIEF

(calmly)

Everything. Give me everything in the register.

MILA

(panicking)

I can't. I can't open the-

THIEF

Give me the cash. Come on, the cash. You have five seconds. 5. 4.

Mila is frantically trying to open the register.

THIEF

3. 2. 1.

MILA

(Simultaneously)

I don't know how to-

The register opens. Mila stares at the Thief. The gun.

THIEF
 Money. Now. All of it.

Mila starts pulling all the cash out quickly.

THIEF
 (losing patience)
 Don't make me come back there! I'll
 put a hole in you.

MILA
 I'm sorry, I'm sorry!

Mila hands Thief the cash, then stands back, hands up. The
 Thief takes it, puts it in his pack, but doesn't stop.

MILA
 That's everything.

THIEF
 No, no, I know you got more.

MILA
 No sir, please, that's everything.

THIEF
 A safe. You got a safe too! I know
 how this works. Money in the safe.

MILA
 The safe!? We don't have a safe!

THIEF
 Yes you do. Yes you do.

MILA
 No! I don't-No we don't!

THIEF
 (angry)
 You have five seconds. 1. 2.

MILA
 No! Sir! We don't have a-

The Thief jumps the counter, grabs Mila and throws her down.
 He puts his gun into her cheek. Mila is hyperventilating. Her
 head starts to bleed.

THIEF
 Where is it!?

MILA
 We don't-we don't...

The Thief knocks over some snacks and then grabs packs of cigarettes. Mila covers her faces as he stands over her. Suddenly it's still. Mila looks. Breathing fast.

The Thief is close, his gun closer.

THIEF
What's back there?

Beat.

MILA
J-j-just some b-boxes-

The thief looks over his shoulder. Then back to Mila.

THIEF
Stand up...now!

Mila is petrified. The thief offers her a hand. Trembling. She takes it. He pulls her up and pushes her to the door.

In the backroom, Mila grabs her purse, he takes it. The Thief sees the security feed and pulls out the tape. But then- A beep indicates the front door opens.

Mila and the Thief stare at each other. Both speechless. The security feed shows someone having entered the store.

THIEF
(whispering)
Get out there! If you tell anybody-

The Thief wipes the blood off her head then cocks his gun. Mila turns and the Thief pushes her through the door. The Thief watches her on the feed, gun pointed at the door. Mila stands, crying quietly. But again, no one is there.

Mila looks back at the door. It doesn't open.

MILA
(whispering)
Please. Please. No. No.

She closes her eyes. A woman approaches her holding snacks. They lock eyes. Mila shakes her head. The woman feels Mila's fear and begins to back off.

The door to the backroom stays shut.
The camcorder is recording.

THE CAMCORDER RECORDS THE BACKROOM.

The thief takes a deep breath.
The door handle turns.
David appears out of the corner.
The thief hears this and tries to react, but he's too late.
David gets him with his knife.

Mila hears a painful shriek and scuffling.
The woman runs out of the gas station, dropping her snacks.
Mila is petrified.
Quick breathing. *What is going on behind the door?*

David pins the thief to the ground, stabbing him with a crescendo of blind fury. Almost feeling the pain himself.

MONTAGE: FLASHBACKS

- 1.) INT. CHILDHOOD HOME - NIGHT, Young David awakes to yelling. He pulls his covers over his head.
- 2.) INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT, David stabs him, drooling.
- 3.) INT. CHILDHOOD HOME - NIGHT, David hides in his bed as the fighting grows closer to him. The door, his last defense.
- 4.) INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT, David continues, the Thief reaches for his gun.

DAVID

STOP!

- 5.) INT. CHILDHOOD HOME - NIGHT, The door bursts open and the argument spills into his room. His mother runs to him.
- 6.) INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT, the Thief grasps the gun.

DAVID

STOP YELLING!

- 7.) INT. CHILDHOOD HOME - NIGHT, David's mother runs to grab him but his father pulls out his gun and-

BANG!

Mila falls back because of the gunshot.
She comes to her senses and runs, slipping on the mess.

INT. GAS STATION-BACK ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

David starts to come out of his frenzy.
Breathing starting to slow.
He looks up at the fluorescent light and then back at his first victim.
He stands.
Wipes blood on his pants.
Victory?

EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

Mila's Car is having trouble starting. She panics. Looking at the gas station. She tries again, hitting the wheel and-
It starts.

Lights flash on.

She pulls out rapidly and hits something in reverse.
She turns and makes to drive away, but pauses.

In her headlights is a man, splashed with blood walking out into the prairie behind the gas station.

David.

She is frightened. Then she recognizes him.

David pauses, covering his eyes.

Holding his camcorder.

He recognizes her car.

He puts down his hand.

They stare at each other.

Mila overcome by what just happened.

David wondering what to do next.

Beat.

David turns and walks into the night.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE: Victim No.1 - Unknown

THE END.