

CONSUMED

by

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EXT. MANTLE LAKE PARK - DAY

1985. YOUNG ALICE REISTAR (5 years old) and her Mother YOUNGER DEBBIE SOLAN (20s, relaxed and full of life) walk across the grass, a lake in the distance.

Alice skips along, smiling and looking very happy, talking to her cuddly toy.

Exiting the park they pass a sign post stating 'Mantle Lake Park'.

They cross an empty road and enter a large tall building where it is dim and silent. Debbie presses the lift button.

Alice playfully hides behind her Mother's legs. Poking her head out first to the left, then the right.

The ding of the lift arriving rings out.

As the doors open, we hear a high pitched sucking air sound. There are six 'people' standing in the small lift. They glow. All have expressionless blank-mask type faces with bright red eyes. These are 'Spirit Walkers'

As the level of the sucking air sound rises to a crescendo the six 'Spirit Walkers' bolt out of the lift with an unintelligible aggressive walla. Debbie chokes violently as the 'Walkers' drag her into the lift and begin to beat her. Young Alice screams.

INT. TRAIN - DAY

ALICE REISTAR (late 30's, preppy, organic socialist.) jolts herself awake in her seat, as her neighbour looks up from reading her book to shoot Alice a dirty look.

RUN TITLE SEQUENCE.

INT. ADULT COLLEGE LECTURE CLASSROOM - DAY

16 Sociology students shuffle in their seats. Alice stands at a traditional podium in front of a screen which shows her presentation.

ALICE  
(passionately)  
Europe in the mid nineteen-  
hundred's, Daily horrors never  
actually making the News. 80% of  
news outlets owned by 5 entities,  
each with identical agendas.

Alice scans the room looking for a response. The students talk among themselves. Shaking heads show disapproval.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Well that is also completely true of today. And what's more we now have the distraction of fake news. When we look back on the past we kind of assume that the people just passively accepted their fates?  
(beat)  
How will we look to future generations?

A student eagerly raises their hand.

STUDENT

Is the same true of medical procedures? Especially some mental health cures?

Alice looks at the clock on the wall. She takes a deep breath, raises an eyebrow.

ALICE

That's a whole lesson on it's own. But remember that mental health isn't something that's cured or not cured.

(smiling)

It's more akin to how tangled is my piece of string and can I still swing on it ok?

The end of lesson alarm on Alice's phone sounds. The students leave the class. They talk amongst themselves.

Alice checks her phone for messages. There is one unread message from 'The Hub': Happy Adoption Day baby.

Alice replies: Thank you so much darling

A second message from The Hub appears: Benedicts tonight! Table booked for 830.

Alice leaves the Adult College, an over-shop space accessed via a door between two high street shops.

EXT. HIGH STREET - AFTERNOON

Carrying a brown take-away bag, ANITA KHAN (late 30's, medical cleric, warm and reliable, but tough) approaches Alice.

ANITA

Hey girlfriend, I need a part time job like you! How are you?

ALICE

Well I'm good now I've seen you.

ANITA

You look great. And how is Superman John?

ALICE

Snoreman John you mean?

They both laugh.

ANITA

Snoreman? What you mean? Boring? Oh my god are you bored of him already?

ALICE

God no! I mean snore as in actually snoring!

Alice mocks a snore sound.

ALICE (CONT'D)

I've not been sleeping well.

ANITA

Bad dreams again?

Alice nods.

ALICE

I thought I'd really worked it all out and moved on, but I guess my subconscious has other ideas.

ANITA

I still remember the day we met you know? 14 years old and wearing blue denim dungarees. You were so cool.

ALICE

Yes, a red hot summer and dressed in full body denim, real cool!

Both women giggle like teenagers.

ANITA

You're due into see Dr. P again soon, aren't you?

Alice nods long.

ANITA (CONT'D)

I'll see you then. I need to go and get back to work, I've got his anchovy sandwich here.

They both pull a disapproving face, hug and then move off in opposite directions.

INT. BENEDICTS RESTAURANT - NIGHT

JOHN REISTAR (40, good condition, well kept, civil servant type.) and Alice approach the waiter by the welcome desk.

JOHN

Hi, 830 reservation for Reistar.

The waiter looks in the bookings diary and nods politely.

WAITER

(pointing)

This way please. Sir? Madam?

They both follow the waiter. The art work on the wall features classic family portraits. Mother, father and several children from a previous century all set in a sea of sepia.

They reach their table overlooking an amazing but creepily eerie fountain. A statue plateau of entwined snakes rising from the centre of the water.

John helps Alice into her seat and then takes his own. The waiter passes the menu, nods and exits.

ALICE

Do you think it's karma for us, John?

JOHN

Karma for what? Something we've done in previous lives? Do you have a dark past I don't know about?

ALICE

Five, John. Five times we've tried.

JOHN

You don't need to remind me how many times it is Al. I've been here right next to you every time.

ALICE

Sorry.

(she grabs his hand)

I want us to have a family so badly, but I've done some really terrible things.

JOHN

What have you done? You're the sweetest person I know.

(cheekily)

You sure you don't have a dark secret past?

John pours a glass of table water and takes a sip.

ALICE

I washed the guinea pig when I was 5. It nearly died. I tripped Maisey Cornwell up walking down the stairs when we were 12. And I spat in Mr Timins food on the Uni trip after he said I had fat thighs.

John coughs, almost choking and nearly spits the water out over the table.

JOHN

Baby, baby. That's madness. Kid stuff. You do  
(wrinkles nose)  
...bad stuff when you're young because you don't always realise the consequence.

ALICE

That's bullshit, John. We all know right from wrong.

JOHN

Nobody died because of anything I've done.  
(beat)  
We are not being denied a child by a cosmic ordering spell.

Alice smiles and takes his hand again.

ALICE

I know. I know.

JOHN

This time we will try again and it will work. Positive mental attitude my love. PMA!

INT. REISTAR BATHROOM - NIGHT

John finishes cleaning his teeth. Bare chested with just a pair of boxer shorts on, he moves from the bright en-suite bathroom to the subtly lit bedroom.

INT. REISTAR BEDROOM - NIGHT

JOHN

And whilst we're waiting,  
(smiles cheekily)  
There's nothing to stop us trying the old fashioned way.

They both stand near the foot of the bed.

ALICE  
Thank you for tonight. For  
remembering. For making the effort.

They move into a passionate embrace and fall onto the bed.

INT. MARBLE HALLWAY - DAYTIME.

The walls echo the reverberance of Alice's heels back to her. There is no one else around. There is only one door out of the foyer.

She opens the over-large door. She walks through and finds an all white staircase leading down.

INT. STAIRWELL - DAYTIME.

A rush of wind and distant footsteps spook Alice. She begins to run down the stairs.

After two flights down, Alice stops and listens. Footsteps following. Another two flights down she reaches a dead end.

The Footsteps begin to slowly thump down the stairs as a sinister presence approaches. The footsteps stop. We hear someone whistling 'Jack Be Nimble' nursery rhyme.

Alice can make out a shadow of a skeletal thin figure. Webby hands, Pre-Human. An adult sized walking foetus. We are introduced to the dark presence who is ROB WRITTHEN.

ROB  
(whispering)  
Alice. Alice.

ALICE  
I have pepper spray!

Her back against the wall, she searches her bag and pockets but no pepper spray. A wall-mounted light begins to flicker and rattle. The light dims and spikes. The mounting bolt-heads flick open, like eyelids, revealing a set of bright red blood-shot eyes.

ALICE (CONT'D)  
I'm calling the Police!

No signal on Alice phone! As Rob's shadow takes another step closer, we hear the air being sucked out of the corridor. The dark shadowy entity moves around the corner of the stair well and forward to confront her.

The malformed, barely human face inches closer to her.

ROB  
You don't recognise me, Alice?

ALICE  
 You're not real.  
 (beat)  
 You're part of my illness. A sick  
 dream...

ROB  
 Denial is such a beautiful shelter,  
 don't you think?

Rob lashes out smashes the light from the wall. Darkness.  
 Silence. We hear very slight body movement break the silence  
 before the whistling of the nursery rhyme continues for one  
 bar. A loud roar and bone-crunching noise shocks us.

INT. REISTAR BEDROOM - MORNING

A mobile phone ringing rips Alice from a nightmare. Barely  
 awake, Alice presses the answer button and holds the phone to  
 her ear.

ALICE  
 Hello.

INT. HOSPITAL DR. PATER'S RECEPTION - MORNING

Anita speaks from a desk phone in a plain, sterile medical  
 environment. Bright. Unforgiving.

ANITA  
 Hi Al. It's Anita. Business first  
 honey, Dr. Pater needs an  
 appointment to discuss the next  
 round of your treatment. Are you ok  
 to do next Wednesday morning? 1015?

INT. REISTAR BEDROOM - MORNING

ALICE  
 Yes. Yes, that's fine.

INT. HOSPITAL DR. PATER'S RECEPTION - MORNING

ANITA  
 Perfect. In the book you go. And  
 Al, while you're in I'd like you to  
 meet a friend of mine, Javier. He's  
 actually running a project on sleep  
 deprivation causes. Just a thought  
 but maybe he can help you?

INT. REISTAR BEDROOM - MORNING

ALICE  
 I've done pretty much every therapy  
 under the sun, An, but anything's  
 worth a go. I mean  
 (satirically)  
 (MORE)

ALICE (CONT'D)

I know exactly what's stopping me  
sleeping - it's bloody nightmares!

INT. HOSPITAL DR. PATER'S RECEPTION - MORNING

ANITA

I'll text you his number.

EXT. HIGH STREET - SATURDAY MIDDAY.

Alice and John Reistar pass a narrow row of shops featuring classic style womens clothing. Holding hands and gazing into the shop windows, they become distracted by the sound of a crying child.

The crying gets louder. From a crowd of 12 window-browsing shoppers, comes a small child, becoming more and more hysterical.

John and Alice look at each other in confusion and then both slowly attempt to approach the boy. Alice bends to her knees.

ALICE

Hey, little man, where's your  
Mummy?

She picks up the toddler and stands easy with him in her arms.

Other shoppers move out of the way as searching for the child comes a HARD LOOKING WOMAN (30's, furry bonnet, Dark clothing). She stops at the edge of the crowd and points at Alice, signalling the return of her Son by curling her index finger. John moves close to Alice.

JOHN

Al, be careful that thing don't  
look a happy bunny.

As the woman approaches, Alice turns to the child and lightly taps her finger on his nose.

ALICE

Hey poppet, is this your Mummy?

The boy nods, and smiles at his Mother. The Mother reaches out, and without a word takes her Son in her arms as walks off back into the crowd.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Thank you?

INT. COFFEE SHOP - AFTERNOON.

Alice and John are sat at a table. The decor matches their clothing.

JOHN

You can't just let your kids wander off and run around in this day and age!

He shakes his head and begins to monotonously rant as Alice picks up her coffee from the table.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Kids are a full time job. You only get one go at it and if you fuck it up, you have to live with it. Anyway, you are going to make a great Mum!

Alice smiles. John stands up and looks around.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I need a wazz (piss).

John exits past a toilet sign. Alice looks down and stares into her coffee cup. She slams the cup down onto the table spilling a little over the side.

The cup is half full of milky white coffee. Floating in the middle of the coffee is an embryonic-looking-egg, the centre moving inside an outer skin. Suddenly the egg duplicates, like a replicating cell into two eggs. The eggs both then begin to duplicate and build into a floating mass of creepy looking eggs - all looking like miniature foetuses.

Alice recoils visibly in her seat. Suddenly, the process begins to reverse and each mini-foetus is painfully absorbed by it's neighbour until there is only one left.

A hand lurches into view pushing the still steaming coffee over into Alice's lap. As she screams in pain, she sees in front of her the malformed face of Rob Writthen.

ALICE

What do you want from me? Leave me alone.

ROB

(loud, aggressive)  
I want you, Alice. I want YOU!

As Rob lunges towards Alice it jolts her enough for her to move sideways...

INT. REISTAR BEDROOM - MORNING.

Alice hits her head on the BEDSIDE CABINET and wakes from the nightmare.

Sitting up shakily, Alice looks around her bedroom. John is sleeping next to her. She gets up and walks to the en-suite bathroom.

INT. REISTAR BATHROOM - MORNING.

Alice switches on the bright light and takes a packet from the mirrored wall cabinet.

We see the label: Clozapine. 100mg 'Two-to-be-taken three times-a-day'. Alice takes the dosage from the pack and swallows dry.

INT. REISTAR BEDROOM - MORNING.

Alice picks up her mobile phone from her bedside cabinet and writes a text: 'Hi Javier, Anita told me to drop you a line about seeing you on Wednesday morning. Am just confirming. Thx. Alice.'

She presses send. A rocket whoosh fires the text.

INT. REISTAR CAR - MORNING.

Alice drives the car as they arrive at the hospital.

ALICE

Jump out here, baby, I'm nipping in to see Anita's dream therapist friend. Grab a coffee and I'll see you out side Dr. P's office?

John looks a little surprised but is amiable.

JOHN

Oh, OK, see you in there. Hey, I love you.

John leans over and kisses Alice on the lips.

INT. HOSPITAL DR. PATER'S RECEPTION - MORNING.

Alice walks straight up to Anita's desk and mockingly slams her hands down in an angry style.

Anita looks up startled.

ALICE

Well good morning there!

ANITA

Ohhh you f..  
(stops the curse word professionally)  
You scared me so much!

ALICE

Where do I find Mr. Javier. He's expecting me.

ANITA

I'll call him now.