

THERESA

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FADE IN:

INT. EASTERN SHORE MARYLAND - DAY

A SERIES OF SHOTS

-- The sun beginning to rise.

-- Fishing boats heading out.

-- The great Chesapeake Bay Bridge.

-- Farm fields being irrigated.

-- Small suburban houses.

-- Strip malls and big-box stores.

-- Morning traffic on narrow streets.

EXT. THERESA'S HOUSE - DAY

THERESA'S HUSBAND (50s) is backing his work-truck out of the driveway of their modest 1970s era rancher.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

The bedroom is dark. The drapes are pulled tight.

THERESA (early 50s) is sleeping.

INT. KITCHEN / DINNING ROOM - DAY

The old décor clashes with the new appliances. The timer on the coffee-maker transitions to 7:30 and automatically begins brewing.

A bouquet of roses with a card sits on a large table.

INT. THERESA'S BEDROOM - DAY

The sounds and smells of the coffee brewing make their way into the bedroom.

Theresa gets out of bed and puts on a robe and slippers.

She opens the drapes. Light slips in.

She shuffles toward the bathroom and reaches in to flick on the lights.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

The room is filled with artificial light.

Theresa closes the door behind her.

She turns the spigot on in the shower and lets the water run while she brushes her teeth.

IN THE MIRROR --

She pokes and pulls on her face. She studies it closely.

The mirror steams up.

IN THE SHOWER --

Theresa scrubs her body. She has a few faded tattoos.

INT. KITCHEN/DINNING ROOM - DAY

Theresa is wearing a robe and a towel on her head.

She smiles when she sees the flowers. She walks over to read the card. She admires them for a moment

She fixes a cup of coffee using powdered creamer.

She sits at the table and pulls a pamphlet on laser hair removal out from under a stack of papers.

She looks reads it while sipping her coffee.

A phone rings. She walks over to pick it up.

THERESA

Happy anniversary!

You know you could have woken me up. I heard you get up anyway.

Aww, you're too sweet.

(sniffing the flowers)

Yes, I did. They're beautiful.

Yes, you did a good job.

So, Outback tonight?

(MORE)

THERESA (CONT'D)

I think the shrimp and chicken.
(joking)
And you'll get what you always do.

I'll have some surprises for you
too when you get home.

Love you too.

Theresa hangs up and sits back down. She places the phone on the table next to her.

She reads a headline from the local news paper.

Theresa scans the pamphlet again. On the back there is a date and time written in pen. She needs to prepare for her appointment.

She walks out of the room unwinding the towel on her head.

EXT. THERESA'S HOUSE - DAY

Theresa walks to her car, gets in, and begins to back out of the driveway.

INT. THERESA'S CAR - DAY

Theresa carefully pulls out. She flips through her CDs and selects *Fleetwood Mac: Greatest Hits*.

She puts the disk in the player and adjusts the volume.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Teresa's car speeds along with traffic. Small strip malls and gas stations flank either side of the highway.

INT. THERESA'S CAR - DAY

Theresa is singing along to the music while paying careful attention to her driving.

She approaches one of the strip malls and pulls into the lot.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Theresa pulls her car right up to a bakery and parks. She gets out and walks to the entrance.

She opens the door and enters with a greeting.

THERESA

Hi...!

The conversation is cut short when the door swings closed.

She can be seen gesturing to the people working behind the counter through the large glass storefront windows.

Theresa emerges from the bakery with a cake.

She puts the cake in the back seat and gets behind the wheel.

The car pulls out of the lot back onto the highway.

INT. THERESA'S CAR - DAY

Teresa looks at her watch. The time read 10:39.

Teresa picks up the speed of her driving.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Theresa is motoring along the highway. She eventually pulls into an older looking strip mall.

She parks her car in front the shop *Totally Tina's*.

INT. THERESA'S CAR - DAY

The song *Gold Dust Woman* has just begun playing when Theresa cuts off the engine. She appears tense.

She gets out of the car and locks the doors.

INT. TOTALLY TINA'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

The waiting area is sparsely decorated. Theresa can be seen approaching the door through the large storefront windows.

The door chimes as Theresa enters.

No one is sitting behind the reception desk. MEGAN (early 20s) walks into the waiting area. She is wearing a lab coat.

MEGAN

Hi, I'm Megan... you must be
Theresa. We've been expecting you.

THERESA
Sorry I'm a little late.

MEGAN
No, don't worry about it. Here, I
can take you right back.

Megan waves Theresa along. They walk down a short hallway
past a few patient rooms.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
We're not too busy right now...
(snapping her gum)
A lot of our business is seasonal.
Anyways, as you can see we have all
sorts of things going on here.
These are all our personal tanning
rooms and here in the back is where
we do the Gentle *Lase* treatments.
We're right in there.

Megan pushes open one of the doors.

INT. PATIENT ROOM - DAY

The overhead florescent light fills the tiny windowless room.

Theresa and Megan enter.

MEGAN
Now I see you're wearing make-up.

THERESA
Oh, shoot... Sorry. I forgot. Just
a habit I guess. Not used to
leaving the house without my face
on.

MEGAN
Don't you worry. It's fine. Lot's
of people forget. You can take it
off in the bathroom down the hall.
Everything you'll need should be in
there.

Megan directs Theresa to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

The light in this bathroom is the worst yet.

Theresa begins running the faucet and takes off her jewelry.

She finds an assortment of products and a box of cotton balls to remove her make up.

When she finishes she examines her face in the mirror again.

INT. PATIENT ROOM - DAY

Therese walks back into the room. Megan closes the door.

Megan directs Theresa to sit in an exam chair in the center of the room, which she does.

THERESA

You here all by yourself?

MEGAN

Tina's back in her office doing paperwork I guess.

THERESA

Oh. The owner. I think that's who I talked to before.

MEGAN

Now just relax.

Megan gently positions Theresa in the exam chair.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

Nervous?

THERESA

A little.

MEGAN

Yeah, I can tell. It's common. Do you want me to put on the radio? Would that help?

THERESA

Sure.

MEGAN

What do you like to listen to?

Megan walks over to a mini-stereo and turns it on.

THERESA

WARM 107?

MEGAN

WARM 107 it is.

Megan dials the station.

Megan reaches into a drawer and pulls out a tube of cream.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

Okay, so we're doing the whole face?

THERESA

Yes.

MEGAN

Alright. I'm just going to put on some of this cream to numb your skin.

THERESA

How bad will it hurt?

MEGAN

It will sting a little. Some patients describe it like having a rubber band snapped against you.

THERESA

Oh.

Megan puts on some latex gloves and applies the cream to areas of Theresa's face.

MEGAN

I'll give you a few minutes for that to start working.

Megan exits the room.

LATER --

Megan reenters.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

All ready?

THERESA

Ready as I'll ever be, I guess.

MEGAN

Don't worry, you'll be a pro in no time.

Megan fires up the machine. It produces a loud electric hum. She tinkers with the wand type stylus and turns a dial.

Megan removes the excess cream from Theresa's face and puts a pair of dark goggles on her. She puts on a pair herself.

Just then *Gold Dust Woman* begins to play on the radio.

THERESA

I was just listening to that song
in the car.

MEGAN

Really?

THERESA

Yeah, just before I came in here.

MEGAN

That's funny.

Megan settles Theresa's head with her hands.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

Ready?

Theresa nods her head.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

Okay, hold still.

Megan places the end of the stylus against Theresa's cheek and pushes the trigger. A flash of light bursts from the end of the stylus and the machine make a popping sound.

Theresa flinches.

Megan repeats the process several times in quick succession.

Theresa's knuckles are white from clutching the arm rests. She puts her hand out to stop Megan.

THERESA

Is it supposed to hurt that much?

MEGAN

Some people have a lower tolerance
for pain. Don't worry, you're doing
just fine. Only a few more minutes
and we'll be done.

Megan gets back into position.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

Now hold still.

She begins the process again, moving even faster.

Little wisps of smoke drift from the point of the stylus.

Theresa clenches her jaw and continues to grip the arm rests. Tears stream down her cheek.

Megan slows when a spot of skin adheres to the stylus.

Megan discovers blisters and welts forming in other areas.

She stops the procedure.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

Excuse me.

Theresa is silent.

Megan leaves the room.

MOMENTS LATER --

The door is ajar. Megan and TINA (early 30s) can be seen peering into the room from the hallway. Megan and Tina argue in a whispered tone.

Megan enters the room. Tina walks away.

Megan is forcing a smile.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

Well, you are all done.

THERESA

(voice shaking)

Okay.

She takes off the goggles and eases out of the chair.

She follows Megan into the hallway.

INT. TOTALLY TINA'S WAITING ROOM

Theresa is walking with a hunch-back. She follows Megan to the reception desk.

Theresa sets her purse on the desk and pulls out a checkbook.

THERESA

How much do I owe?

MEGAN

Oh, uh... um... here, the total should be...

Megan clicks some keys on the computer.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
\$127.69.

Theresa writes out a check and hands it to Megan. She turns around to leave.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
Oh, one sec.

Megan runs into one of the adjacent rooms and pulls out a bunch of small tubes of gel.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
Here take these.

Megan forces another smile.

THERESA
Thank you.

She puts the tubes in her purse.

Theresa exits the building.

Tina comes out from her office and approaches Megan. The two stand and watch as Theresa makes it to her car.

Theresa vomits on her front tire while holding onto the side of the car.

Tina and Megan stand side-by-side looking stunned as they watch Theresa through the store-front windows.

INT. THERESA'S CAR - DAY

Theresa recovers from vomiting and gets into her car.

She looks into the rearview mirror and sees a glimpse of the damage done to her face. She begins hyperventilate.

THERESA
Oh god... Oh god...!

She puts the keys in the ignition.

She starts the car. *Gold Dust Women* picks up where it left off. This sends her into hysterics.

She presses the CD player eject button. The disk spits out but the radio automatically comes on at a higher volume.

Teresa pounds her palm against the device until it powers off. She screams.

She pulls it together enough to start driving.

EXT. THERESA'S HOUSE - DAY

Teresa pulls into the driveway and partway onto the lawn.

She gets out of the car and flees into the house.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Teresa drops to her knees by the toilet. She retches.

She retrieves one of the aloe tubes from her purse and delicately applies the lotion to her face. The pain increase exponentially from this.

She gnashes her teeth. She rapidly fans her face with her hands.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Teresa sobbing loudly.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Teresa pulls herself up on the sink and looks in the mirror.

For the first time -- since the partial glimpse in the rearview --she can see the full extent of the damage.

Her face doesn't look like her own. It is extremely swollen and red. Large fluid filled blisters have formed.

She begins to hyperventilate. Her eyes roll up. She loses consciousness.

She strikes her head on the sink as she falls. Some of the blisters on her face rupture and bleed.

EXT. THERESA'S HOUSE - DUSK

Teresa's husband arrives home from work. He gets out of his truck with a small gift box in his hand.

He notices the car door ajar, the bad parking job, and that the interior lights are on. He looks in the back seat and sees the cake.

He rushes to the front door of the house and finds it unlocked. He opens it.

THERESA'S HUSBAND

Honey...? Everything okay? Where are you? Honey...

He closes the door behind him.

EXT. CHESAPEAKE BAY - NIGHT

An ambulance speeds across a distant bridge. Its lights and sirens are barely perceivable. The bridge is long and it takes the ambulance some time to traverse the distance.

FADE OUT