

Betrayal
(A Short Writing Exercise on the topic of Betrayal)

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FADE IN:

EXT. FRONT DOOR. SUBURBAN NEIGHBOURHOOD - NIGHT

Darkness surrounds a closed front door. All is quiet. Street lamps sparsely light up the neighbourhood.

Suddenly, the door opens. A MAN slips out.

He carefully closes the door behind him. He looks around, pulling his trenchcoat up around his ears.

He disappears down the street.

The door opens again. A WOMAN slips out.

She also wears a trenchcoat which she too pulls up around her ears.

She follows the man - stopping behind every lamp post.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The man's feet scurry down the street, stopping and turning every now and again.

They disappear out of frame.

The woman's feet enter the frame. They follow the man, speeding up and slowing down at regular intervals, still stopping behind every lamp post.

EXT. STREET CORNER - NIGHT

The man approaches a street corner. The woman is seen in the background, skipping from lamp post to lamp post.

He stops at the corner, looking around.

The woman manages to reach a lamp post, just as he turns and glances behind him. He does not see her.

He continues on, crossing the street.

The woman peeks out from her hiding place and follows.

The man's feet step into a puddle. He stops.

The woman runs back to her previous lamp post.

The man shakes his feet.

He continues on.

The woman, slightly more apprehensive, resumes her pursuit.

EXT. PARK ENTRANCE - NIGHT

The man enters a city park and heads towards the trees.

It is a full moon.

The woman appears, still hot on the man's trail.

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

A female silhouette waits in the shadow of a tall tree.

The man approaches her.

We see she is a beautiful woman with long, cascading hair. She bears resemblance to the glamorous movie stars of the 1940's: Lana Turner, Veronica Lake, Rita Hayworth. She smiles slyly at the man.

He stops a few feet away from her. He returns the smile.

He glances around once more, before slowly sliding his way up close and personal to the woman.

They look into each other's eyes, smiling.

The other woman - the one in the trenchcoat who has been following the man - watches from a far, behind a bush. Her face expresses sheer apprehension.

The woman with the cascading hair reaches her hand into the man's pocket and pulls out a £5 note.

She stares at him blankly.

The man grimaces, raising his eyebrows, as if to say: "Well?"

The woman leans in, their faces very close. She looks at him slyly, savouring the moment. The man's eyes follow her every move. She coyly shakes her head.

The woman in the trenchcoat - the one hiding in a nearby bush - looks increasingly distraught.

The man reaches his hand into his pocket and pulls out another £5 note. The woman with the cascading hair smiles... and takes the money.

She then reaches into her handbag...

... and pulls out a pack of cigarettes.

The man looks visibly relieved. He grins like a boy on Christmas Day.

He takes the pack of cigarettes and gives the woman a hug and a quick kiss on the cheek.

He runs off.

EXT. PARK BENCH. PARK - NIGHT

The man sits down on the bench and looks around carefully, before pulling the pack of cigarettes and a box of matches out of his pocket.

He can barely contain himself as he removes the wrapping. The excitement he feels seems to trip him up and a simple task becomes surprisingly difficult.

The wrapping eventually does come off and he opens the lid. Light seems to emanate from the pack, as rows of neatly lined cigarettes reveal themselves.

He carefully takes out a cigarette and positions it gently between his lips.

His eyes close momentarily.

His hands fumble with the box of matches. He grabs hold of one.

He tries to light the match, but the shaft snaps.

He pulls out another match from the box, dropping several others on the ground in the process.

Again, the match breaks.

The man GROANS, as he pulls out a third match - this time with all the composure he can muster.

He carefully strikes the match.

It lights up in a beautiful flame.

The man lights his cigarette.

He inhales deeply, leans back and looks up at the sky, and then exhales slowly. He SIGHS with delight.

Suddenly, he hears a TAPPING noise.

He looks straight ahead of him and sees the woman in the trenchcoat, arms crossed, foot TAPPING, staring him right in the eye.

She does NOT look happy.

Her trenchcoat is open, and beneath it we notice a T-shirt with the sentence "Smoking Kills" brightly emblazoned upon it.

The man's jaw drops. The cigarette falls to the ground.

He steps on it with his foot and sheepishly looks at the woman, shrugging his shoulders.

The woman's eyes well up with tears. She removes a ring from her finger and throws it at him. He winces.

The man rises to his feet, but the woman turns and runs away.

The man kicks the gravel, visibly upset and frustrated. He lets out a MOAN, as he watches the disappearing woman. His hands grab hold of his hair, as he bends over, straightens up, then turns around in a circle, MOANS some more and lastly looks at the sky. He compulsively repeats this behaviour over and over.

A sudden calm settles over him. He pulls out the pack of cigarettes from his pocket.

He looks at it.

He empties out the remaining cigarettes on the ground and steps on them ferociously.

He picks up the ring the woman threw at him, and closes his hand tightly around it.

He runs in the same direction as the woman did.

FADE OUT.