

THE MAN IN THE CAFÉ

Written by

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FADE IN.

INT. DINER - DAY

It's one of those off-the-beaten-path places from the 1950's, that's decor hasn't been updated since sometime in the 1980's. About the last time the grill was cleaned.

A handful of patrons fill the otherwise ghost-like diner.

A SALESMAN sips coffee while he reads the paper at the counter, he bites on a pencil.

An OLD COUPLE eat their breakfast in a booth by the corner, they feed each other toast.

A YOUNG FAMILY, a man and woman with a baby carriage are at a table by the entrance, the young wife giggles, then hic-ups.

FRED, 40's, works on cooking someone's food at the grill.

A MAN, mid-50's, with a fedora hat and old fashion neatly pressed suit, sits at a booth.

He takes a sip from his coffee cup.

MEGAN, 20's, comes by with a bright smile and rosy disposition, holding a coffee pot in her hand.

MEGAN

(to Man)

Can I top that up for you?

The man gives a warm and pleasant smile.

MAN

Yes, if you would be so kind.

Megan fills the cup happily, then glances at the man, she stares at him a moment.

MEGAN

I'm sorry, but I hope you don't mind me saying. You remind me a lot of my father.

MAN

I don't mind you saying that at all. Funny thing is, you remind me a bit of my daughter.

MEGAN

Well now, that's remarkable, isn't it?

MAN

Remarkable yes. You're Megan, right?

Megan taps her nametag with "MEGAN" written on it.

MEGAN

I sure hope so. Otherwise I've got someone else's uniform.

Megan chuckles.

MAN

Megan Adler?

Megan is taken aback.

MEGAN

That's right--how did you know--do we know each other?

MAN

Not quite. Would you please sit with me a moment. I would like to share something important with you.

Megan looks around the cafe. Then back to the Man, she's getting nervous.

MEGAN

Uh...Are you some government worker or something? 'Cuz I was one-hundred percent honest about my tips on my taxes.

MAN

No, no, I don't work for the government. I'm a concerned friend. Please have a seat. I need to discuss something with you.

MEGAN

Oh. Well I'm really sorry, but I've got customers to keep happy. Maybe some other time.

MAN

Megan, please sit with me, if only for a few moments. It's important.

MEGAN

Really I can't...

Megan looks to Fred, he's busy cooking someone's greasy food.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

My boss will dock my pay if I do.
He barley gives me a break as is.

Megan gives a polite smile and is about to move on-

The man calls out to Fred waving his hand in the air.

MAN

Fred.

Megan looks to the man with surprise and then to Fred.

Fred looks to see who is calling his name and spots the Man's waving hand.

FRED

Yeah what is it?

MAN

Fred, would you mind if I took a few minutes of Miss Adler's time to have a chat with her... You can assure her I'm a pleasant man, and you are not going to dock her pay.

Fred takes a moment... then:

FRED

Megan, take a few minutes to chat with this pleasant man will ya, I ain't gonna dock yer pay.

MEGAN

Fred what about the other customers?

At that moment the few cliental that are in the diner look to Megan in unison.

SALESMAN

(with a smile)

I'll be fine Megan, talk to the man.

THE OLDER COUPLE

We are fine for a few minutes without you. Talk to the man.

THE YOUNG FAMILY

We are fine, talk to the man, he seems pleasant.

EVERYONE

Talk to the Man, Megan.

Megan is confused as to what the hell is going on. She looks to the Man who softly smiles. Out of excuses.

MEGAN

(to herself)

Okay, that's freaky, but I guess I'll talk to the Man.

The Man gestures to the seat across from him.

Megan puts down the coffee pot and seats herself.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

Okay, so how do you know me?

MAN

Are you and your father close?

MEGAN

Not really, I haven't seen him in a long time... you just seemed to remind me of him. From what little I can remember of him, he was a good man...

(she smirks)

you're not my father, are you?

The man smiles with warmth.

MAN

No I'm afraid not... I think I might just resemble him because of the nature of our situation.

MEGAN

And that is?

MAN

Do you have nightmares?

MEGAN

Nightmares?... I can't recall any lately, why?

MAN

I do... I have the same one every night, and have for the past three years. A nightmare that takes place here in this diner.

MEGAN

Here?

MAN

Yes, here.

MEGAN

You've been here before,
(jokes)
You've probably ate the clam chowder, that'll give you nightmares.

MAN

No. I've never been here before. I don't even know where here is.

The Man is serious, Megan takes his que.

MEGAN

That's silly, we're...

Megan pauses, tries to think, it's on the tip of her tongue, but she can't grasp it.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

That's odd, I can't remember where we are.

Megan becomes a little uneasy. She looks back to the Man.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

What do I have to do with your nightmare.

MAN

It has everything to do with you...

The Man motions to the others.

MAN (CONT'D)

...and with them. But it's with you that I've made a considerate effort to reach. To warn.

MEGAN

What happens in your nightmare?

Megan then jumps at the JINGLING of bells above the door, announcing new customers.

REBEL MAN, 20's, enters. He's slim, tattooed, with a leather jacket and no shirt on underneath. He's followed with a young and equally REBEL GIRL, 19.

They seat themselves in the booth directly behind Megan, but as they pass, the Rebel Man locks eye contact with Megan, his icy blue eyes holds a void of blackness behind them that it sucks in Megan's attention... he flashes a grin which gives Megan the shivers. She whips her attention back to the Man.

Megan loses herself in a moment unnerving foreboding.

MAN

Have you ever became aware that you were dreaming while asleep?

MEGAN

(a little distracted)
I don't know... I can't recall.

MAN

Its suppose to be a wonderful gift... to be lucid in your dreams. To take total control over them. To do whatever you please without consequences.

MEGAN

I suppose that would be nice.

The Man places his hands on top of Megan's hands. She notices that her own hands are shaking of their own free will.

MAN

When my nightmares became lucid, I found I still had no control over them. The horrible event would still happen, regardless of what I did to try and stop it... that's when I knew it was more than just a dream, more than a nightmare. It was something beyond me.

The Man is frightened, which makes Megan frighten.

Megan delicately pulls her hands from under the Mans.

MEGAN

I don't understand but you're starting to really scare me.

MAN

Good, you need to be frightened,
you need to remember this! Look
around you, Megan.

Megan scans the Diner, there is an uneasy stillness to the place, everyone's eyes are on Megan. Fred, the Salesman, the Old Couple, the Young Family.

Even the Rebel Man with his devil's grin, his eyes have a dark intensity, locked on to Megan.

Megan pulls away from his gaze immediately shutting her eyes.

MAN (CONT'D)

Megan, please open your eyes and
look again.

Megan slowly opens her eyes to the Man across from her, his grim but gentle face is hopeful, encouraging, then his eye line shifts towards Fred.

Megan follows suit to see Fred standing behind the counter, his face suddenly changes to the face of the Rebel Man, overlaid, who's sinister grin is forged into her memory.

Then Fred pulls a gun to his temple out of nowhere and fires--

BANG!

Brains splatter onto the grill, and sizzle in the grease.

Megan looks to the Salesman at the counter, his face changes to that of the grinning Rebel Man. He places the barrel of the gun under his chin and pulls the trigger--

BANG!

Red paints the ceiling.

The Old Couple, husband's and wife's faces both change to the same evil grinning Rebel Man, before they each pull a gun and cross fire into their respective partner's chest.

BANG, BANG!

They face plant into their food.

Megan whips her head towards the Young Couple and their baby in the carriage.

The Young Husband and Young Wife's faces change to the visage of the Rebel Man before the Young Husband pulls a gun and shoots his newlywed wife: BANG!

Then turning the gun to the carriage and fires: BANG! BANG! A small bloody arm flops into view for a moment before disappearing back into the carriage.

Then he turns it onto himself and pulls the trigger--

BANG! SPLAT, brains all over the window.

Megan turns to the booth behind her, the Rebel Man is holding the gun in his hand, smoke whispers up from the barrel. His devil grin a permanent fixture on his face.

His Rebel Girlfriend then turns to face Megan.

REBEL GIRL

He did this for me. Because he
fucking loves me. Look at his hard-
on. Now it's your turn bitch!

The Rebel Man turns the gun on Megan, draws his bead on her, he winks, then fires.

BANG!

CUT TO:

INT. DINER/BACK ROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Megan jolts from her sleep. She is dripping sweat, and breathing hard.

Catching her breath she scans her surroundings. It a tiny staff room.

MEGAN

Jesus fuck.

She gets up and straightens out her uniform with shaky hands.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

(to herself)

Holy shit, Megan, get a hold of
your self.

(then)

What in Gods name brought that on?

Megan exits, heading back to the floor.

INT. DINER

Megan walks back out front, behind the counter.

FRED
Thank you your highness for making
an appearance.

MEGAN
Sorry, I fell asleep.

FRED
Well I hope you got yer money's
worth, 'cuz that venture to
dreamland just cost you some pay.

Megan grabs the coffee pot.

MEGAN
Yeah. Fine. Whatever.

Megan turns, then pauses at the sight of the Salesman at the counter drinking his coffee, reading the paper, biting on his pencil.

The Old Couple in the corner booth, feeding each other toast.

The Young Family of three, young husband, young wife, and baby in a carriage by the entrance, the wife giggles, then hic-ups.

She looks towards the booth, expecting to find the Man... but there is nothing, no one.

Megan shakes her head and smirks.

MEGAN (CONT'D)
(to herself)
Man I hate deja vu.

Then, there is a RINGING of the bells over the entrance door, and enter the slim Rebel Man and Rebel Girl.

Megan freezes with a gasp, the color runs from her face.

The Rebel Man locks gazes with Megan, his icy blue eyes a facade to the black empty void of darkness. He gives her a spine chilling grin.

Megan still frozen in terror, watches as they sit in the same booth they had done in her dream, the Rebel Man not taking his gaze off Megan, then winks at her.

CUT TO BLACK