

HIDDEN IN THE SAND

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INT. UNIVERSITY LECTURE HALL - DAY

Inside a large modern lecture hall, THOMAS, 38, stands behind his lectern, resting against it. He looks at the time on his watch. Twenty past one.

He looks up at the empty seats in front of him. Row after row. Must be close to a hundred seats and they're all empty.

The door to the lecture hall opens. Thomas snaps his head to look over towards it, hopeful and excited.

A young female student, 19, pokes her head in.

THOMAS

Yes dear?

FEMALE STUDENT

Yes, I'm looking for the gender studies class?

Thomas's hope and excitement melts away. He waves a disheartened limp hand out towards her.

THOMAS

Down the hall, last door on the right.

FEMALE STUDENT

Thank you.

THOMAS

I'm in the middle of teaching my environmental science class if you're interested?

She shakes her head emphatically.

FEMALE STUDENT

No thanks.

She slowly backs out, closing the door shut behind her.

INT. UNIVERSITY - SCIENCE LABORATORY - DAY

Inside a modern and sleek looking laboratory, RYAN, 44, dressed all in white holds onto a sharp scalpel and busily dissect a strange looking purple fruit with large yellow, blue and green spots all over it.

Thomas sits up on a nearby counter, drinking a cup of coffee and eating an oversized doughnut. He watches Ryan as he works.

THOMAS

How am I supposed to teach a
fucking class if there's no one
there to hear it?

Ryan is totally emersed in his work. He glances across at
Thomas before cutting more of this bizarre looking fruit.

RYAN

What did you say?

THOMAS

I can't get anyone to listen to me,
so what's the point of carrying on?

Ryan takes a step back from the fruit, smiling excited.

RYAN

Do you know where this was found?

THOMAS

No idea, but it looks fucking
disgusting.

RYAN

Not at all, it's delicious.

THOMAS

I'm talking about quitting the
university and you're obsessing
over a stupid looking fruit.

Ryan turns to face Thomas. He shakes his head at him,
annoyed.

RYAN

This might be the find of the
century.

Thomas rolls his eyes, he couldn't care less.

THOMAS

How cute.

RYAN

Cute?

THOMAS

I'm having an existential crisis. I
have no fucking students. No one
listens to me and you react to that
information by not listening to me.

RYAN

This fruit was found growing in the Atacama desert. Where we thought it would be impossible for anything to grow, for life to exist, then this was found. It's edible, delicious and seemingly doesn't need water, only sunlight to grow. This is fucking huge.

Thomas jumps down from the counter.

THOMAS

I've got to go.

RYAN

Take some fruit with you.

THOMAS

I'm meeting Lana. A date.

RYAN

Then take some for her, she'll be blown away.

THOMAS

You need to get out more.

Ryan cuts up some of the fruit and puts it into a clear plastic bag for Thomas. Ryan then takes a couple of bites himself.

RYAN

No, I'm staying here. This fruit is my life's work now. I'm not leaving this lab until I've learnt everything about it.

Thomas heads for the exit, holding onto his plastic bag of fruit.

THOMAS

And there's me thinking I was the one in fucking trouble.

Thomas leaves. Ryan is still transfixed by the fruit. He takes a couple more bites out of it.

RYAN

Oh my god, that tastes so fucking good.

EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

LANA, 35, dressed up for a night out waits outside a fancy restaurant. Arms crossed in front of her chest, she looks less than impressed.

Thomas, in a fresh outfit, dressed smartly for his date jogs up to her. He's looking more than a little guilty.

THOMAS

I'm sorry I'm late.

She holds a finger up to him, correcting.

LANA

No, what you should be saying to me, is you're sorry that you're very late.

He nods.

THOMAS

I've got a present for you.

She cocks an eyebrow, intrigued.

LANA

A present?

Thomas pulls out the clear plastic bag of fruit from a pocket. He holds it out to her, smiling

THOMAS

Here.

He's smiling but she's now frowning. Not sure if this is some kind of joke that she's not getting. Or if he really is serious.

LANA

Really?

He shakes it at her.

THOMAS

Seriously, take it.

She reluctantly takes hold of the bag.

LANA

Yum, what the hell is it?

THOMAS

It's a new kind of fruit found in some desert somewhere. It's brand fucking new.

LANA

What's it taste like?

THOMAS

No idea.

She chuckles to herself.

LANA

Wow, what a thoughtful gift.

THOMAS

Shall we go inside?

He tries to encourage her to head inside but she stays where she is.

LANA

Hold on, I want to try it.

THOMAS

Well I want to sit down and order.

LANA

Well then dickhead, you shouldn't have been late.

She opens up the plastic bag and takes in a big sniff.

LANA (CONT'D)

It smells nice.

THOMAS

Then hurry up and take a bite so we can go inside and order. I'm fucking starving.

She reaches inside and takes a small bite. Savouring it.

LANA

You know what, that's pretty good.

She takes some more.

THOMAS

Really?

LANA
No scratch that, it's pretty
fucking delicious.

THOMAS
High praise.

She quickly eats every last piece of fruit inside the bag
until there's nothing left.

LANA
Wow, that might be the nicest
tasting fruit I've ever had.

He smirks.

THOMAS
But you didn't feel like sharing?

She playfully punches him in the arm.

LANA
You got anymore?

He thinks this over.

THOMAS
No, but I know where we can get a
box full of it.

She grabs a hold of his hands and pulls him forcibly away
from the restaurant.

LANA
Come on.

THOMAS
What do you mean? We have to go
inside, we're so close.

She continues pulling on him.

LANA
Come on.

THOMAS
But I'm hungry.

She pulls on him harder, dragging him away from the
restaurant. It takes all of her strength but she's doing it.

LANA
You've found a delicious, never
before discovered magical fruit.
(MORE)

LANA (CONT'D)

Then you tell me you can get me a box of it. Well, I want that box and you're going to get it me.

He rolls his eyes but gives in, allowing Lana to drag him away.

EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DAY

Thomas stands in the middle of campus. Busy with lots of students walking around.

Down by his feet he has an open box of the mystery fruit. A fruit that officially doesn't even have a name.

Thomas starts handing the fruit out to those university students.

THOMAS

I'm professor Thomas, I'll be lecturing at 2.00pm in room 127. Environmental science. Come on by. I'll have plenty more of this fruit to give away if you come.

The students who already have a piece of fruit start to chomp down on them. Eating them as quickly as they can. Can't seem to get enough of them.

More students rush on over to Thomas and in a flash the once filled box of fruit is completely empty.

But Thomas has a huge smile, loving the attention he's receiving.

INT. UNIVERSITY - SCIENCE LABORATORY - DAY

Thomas enters the lab with an undeniable look of pride.

THOMAS

Well, well, well. Fuck me, you're never going to be able to guess what I'm about to tell you.

(a beat)

I'm expecting a full classroom, a hundred eager students all coming to hear me teach. And to be honest this is all I've ever wanted and it's all thanks to your magical fruit.

For the whole time Thomas has been talking, Ryan has had his back to him. Sitting at his work station, hunched over. From where he is, it's impossible for Thomas to know what he's doing.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Hey!

Ryan still stays hunched over. Thomas frowns annoyed, takes a couple more forward steps inside the lab.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Ryan, what the hell are you doing?
Can you not hear me?

No reaction, Ryan remains hunched over, but as Thomas continues to step close he can hear Ryan slurping and gulping. The sounds that are coming from him are almost comical.

Thomas gets in close, turns Ryan around in his swivel seat. Ryan is gorging on the fruit. Shovelling fistfuls of it directly into his mouth.

He looks completely lost, his sole focus is simply to eat as much as he can. A full blown addict.

His eyes dark around the outside and bright red in the middle. Almost as if he doesn't have time to blink.

Thomas staggers backwards, terrified. Completely caught off guard.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

What the fuck.

Ryan keeps his eyes locked on Thomas whilst he continues to simply shovel the pieces of fruit into his mouth. Always keeping his mouth full, struggling to breathe.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

What the hell has happened to you?

A look of pure horror washes over Thomas's face as he begins to understand that he's lost his friend to whatever this is.

INT. THOMAS'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Thomas bursts into his bedroom, out of breath and face drenched in sweat. He must have ran all the way home.

He rushes over to his wardrobe, ripping open the doors, under blankets and old clothes he finds a bullhorn.

He holds it out and tests it, but it doesn't work. He checks the batteries.

THOMAS

Dead.

Now his doorbell starts to ring over and over.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

In a minute!

The doorbell continues. He searches more of his bedroom. Finds a packet of fresh batteries. Loads them into the bullhorn.

The doorbell continues. He looks out towards the bedroom door, enraged.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Fucking just wait. Jesus I need to warn the whole world here.

He tests the bullhorn.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Attention please, attention please.

It works and it's super loud.

He smiles, pleased with himself.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

And people will hear me, if they want to or not.

The ringing doorbell stops. It's then replaced with the sound of glass breaking.

Thomas runs towards the bedroom door.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

What the fuck is going on out there?

INT. THOMAS'S HOUSE - FRONT ROOM - DAY

Lana, armed with a large hammer stands inside the middle of the front room.

Her eyes black and red just like Ryan's.

Thomas comes sprinting into the front room but immediately puts on the breaks when he sees who it is and what she's holding.

THOMAS

Lana?

She's foaming at the mouth, her voice shaking.

LANA

You're going to give me more.

He holds out his hands to her, pleading.

THOMAS

You're sick

She approaches, holding the hammer high above her head. Ready to strike.

LANA

You've got more. I know you do.
You're hiding it from me. And I
want it. I want it now.

THOMAS

I don't have anything.

LANA

Don't fucking lie to me. The fruit.
You have more. Just fucking give it
to me. Don't make me hurt you.

THOMAS

You need help, you're addicted.

She screams.

LANA

Give it to me.

THOMAS

Please, I love you.

She strikes the hammer across his head, killing him.

Thomas collapses to the floor, but he's dead even before he lands. Lana continues to attack his lifeless body. Slamming the hammer down over and over again.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END