

Stranger Than Yesterday

A Screenplay By

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IN BLACK:

Short, staccato-like, breaths.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

A door -- number 203.

A white blur, a body, emerges from the other side. Its mass and motion carry it to the opposite wall, throwing it. Slamming it.

A YOUNG WOMAN, 19, drops to the floor, draws her knees up, holds herself. Laughs. Cries.

EXT. RURAL ROAD - DAY

The road, a black line, extends into the distance.

A car, an old junker, passes.

INSIDE

Wedged between boxes, sits seven year old DORI. Her MOTHER, a bohemian type, glances back.

MOTHER
I'm twenty-eight, still young.

Dori shifts, elbowing the boxes.

MOTHER
(lighting a cigarette)
If I quit smokin' I might live,
what, another fifty years? Maybe by
then I'll have sold somethin'.

Dori coughs.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

The Young Woman stands, shakes.

MOTHER (V.O)
But it doesn't matter. It's not
about money.

The Young Woman zigzags, stumbling down the hall. Behind her, on the floor, lay a knife. Its blade covered with blood.

MOTHER (V.O.)
I don't care about money. We don't
care about money. Not anymore.

The Young Woman brings her hand to the wood of a door, making only a slight sound.

INT. CAR - DAY

MOTHER
I promise, you won't have to do
anything.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

A fist strikes the door, slamming against it.

MOTHER (V.O.)
No one is gonna hurt you.

The door opens. SUSAN, forty, looks at the young woman.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)
Who is it?

SUSAN
You can't stay here.

The Young Woman swallows.

FRANK, fifty, buttons his pants. Susan looks at him. Behind them, on the floor, sit cardboard boxes, stacks of them.

SUSAN
This is --

FRANK
It doesn't matter.

He grabs a camera, an old 16mm.

FRANK
I'm leaving.

He limps into the hall.

SUSAN
No. She's not staying. Look at her.
She's high.

FRANK

She was here earlier. Hello, Dori.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dori is seated on a couch. SUSAN, upset, stares at her.

SUSAN

It's late, it's --

She throws her hands up, it's useless. Dori, Stoned, isn't listening.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Shell, 22, sits, half naked, on the edge of the couch.

SHELL

I told you not to leave.

She says, looking at a lump beneath a blanket.

SHELL

I knew you'd be back ... If you could walk.

The blanket shifts.

SHELL

C'mon, I know you're in there.

A hand pushes out, opens. Shell moves toward it, holds it.

SHELL

Sit up.

She says, repositioning Dori.

SHELL

Your mom, she called. I didn't
wanna say anything, but she did ...
Before you left.

Dori stares.

SHELL

She loves you. She said it.

Dori shakes her head, the motion carries her to the floor.

SHELL
(extending a hand)
She does.

Susan enters.

Shell looks at her - She's wearing a tattered, black nightgown. It's specked with paint. It drags across the floor as she moves from window to window, lifting shades, flooding the room with Light.

Dori, reacting, retreats beneath the blanket.

SHELL
What are you doing?

SUSAN
It's morning.

She turns to the kitchen.

SUSAN
I'm fixing a drink.

SHELL
(To Dori)
I know she does. And guess what?!

Dori doesn't respond.

SHELL
C'mon, guess!

Shell continues, pulling at the blanket.

SHELL
She loves me, too. She said it. She did. She --

Susan returns, interrupting her.

SUSAN
Frank's coming back.

SHELL
With boxes. I know.

SUSAN
And friends.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Susan's at the door, holding it open.

SHELL
C'mon.

Shell motions to a young man, BAY. He's fit, muscular, holding two boxes, one on top of another.

SHELL
Just put 'em...

She looks at the blanket that still covers Dori.

SHELL
Any where.

He sets the boxes down, then disappears into the hallway.

Another man, SI, enters.

SHELL
And what's your name?

MAN
Si.

SHELL
Is that your real name?

Si looks at her but doesn't respond.

SHELL
Is that his real name?

Frank shrugs.

SHELL
Dori, c'mon, someone's got
somethin'.

Dori, beneath the blanket, stirs.

Frank directs Si to a back bedroom. He stumbles over a box.

FRANK
Careful.

Si continues.

Dori surfaces.

Her eyes, red, stare forward, looking at nothing.

SHELL
Si's gonna...

She looks at him as he returns from the bedroom.

SHELL
...Set us up. Right?

SI
What?

Shell pulls at the hem of Dori's skirt, inching it up.

SHELL
You're gonna get us high.

FRANK
Si's gonna work.

Susan, still at the door, shakes her head.

FRANK
This is a job.

SHELL
I know.

FRANK
(looking at Susan)
And a good one, too.

SHELL
God!
(to Susan)
How much are you gettin'?

SUSAN
Don't worry about it.

SHELL
(to Frank)
You're paying her, right?

FRANK
Yes, she's gettin' paid.

SHELL
How much?

SUSAN
Enough.

SHELL
Enough to make us happy? All of us?

SUSAN
I'm not doin' this for you.
(looking at Dori)
Or her.
(under her breath)
Slut.

Bay, again, enters the apartment.

SHELL
What was your name?

BAY
I didn't say ... Bay.

SHELL
(To Frank)
Baily?

Frank shrugs.

BAY
Bay. Just Bay.

SHELL
That's stupid.

BAY
It's a stage name.

FRANK
More boxes down stairs.

Bay exits the apartment.

SHELL
He's cute.

FRANK
And you're a lesbian.

SUSAN
Or was that last night?

FRANK
You want in?

SHELL
With my mother?!

SUSAN

Frank!

SHELL

Did you hear that, Dori? Frank wants to break us up.

Si returns carrying a tripod.

Bay crosses the room.

FRANK

Si, Bay. Bay, Si.

The two shake hands. They speak, but we do not hear what they say.

SHELL

(to Dori)

They're both hot, but, no, I wouldn't do that.

SUSAN

Again.

SHELL

What?!

SUSAN

Again. You wouldn't do that again.

SHELL

No, I wouldn't cheat.

(changing the subject)

Two guys, one girl? Who watches that?

Si and Bay continue carrying boxes in.

SHELL

Not guys. They don't wanna look at guys. Gays? They don't wanna look at girls. Girls?

SUSAN

Women.

SHELL

They don't wanna look at you.

Si stacks a box on top of another box.

SI

Last one.

Bay exits to the kitchen, returning with a chair. He brings it to the coffee table -- sets a small leather pouch down.

BAY

Do you mind?

SUSAN

No.

Shell looks at it, watching as he unzips it.

SHELL

What do ya got?

BAY

Coke.

He prepares the table, clearing a space to cut it on.

SHELL

How much?

FRANK

It's work related.

Si laughs.

FRANK

It gets 'em ... keeps 'em --

SI

-- Excited.

SHELL

Hard?

Frank nods.

Shell laughs.

BAY

I can get it up!

SHELL

Just not...

She looks at Susan.

SHELL

...with Her.

SUSAN
Fuck you!

SHELL
That's what Frank wants, isn't it?

SUSAN
Christ, shut up.

FRANK
Does she have to be here?

SHELL
I live here.

FRANK
So do I ... now.

SHELL
Great. Should I call you daddy?
Or was that, like, the name of one
of your films?

Frank looks at Susan, she's doubled-over, laughing.

SUSAN
You did, you made a film called
Daddy.

Bay drops a straw onto the coffee table.

BAY
I was in that!

He snorts a line.

BAY
It was good.

He snorts a second line.

BAY
Really good.

FRANK
I'm gonna set up.

Frank limps into the bedroom.

SHELL
You didn't have to take him in.

SUSAN
Like her?

SHELL
Dori?

SUSAN
She's got an apartment ... down the
hall.

Bay stands, giving his chair to Si. He sits, cutting two more
lines.

SHELL
Dori is my girlfriend. Dori loves
me.

SUSAN
Frank loves me.

SHELL
Right.

Si snorts a line, then looks at Shell.

SI
One left.

Shell looks at it, examining it.

SI
You don't want it?

SHELL
One?

Si, straw in hand, drops down, as if to snort the last line.

SHELL
No. One's good.

She reaches beneath the couch.

SHELL
One's fine.

She says, grabbing a Syringe.

SHELL
I need a

She eyes the floor.

SHELL
There. Get it.

Si looks around, spots the bottom of a soda can -- hands it to Shell.

Its bottom, already black, Shell scoops the drug up, depositing it in, employing it as a "spoon."

A SERIES OF SHOTS PLAY OVER VARIOUS VOICES:

SUSAN (V.O.)
What were you thinking about that made your cock so hard?

-- A shoelace tied tightly around an upper arm.

SI (V.O.)
There was this commercial, an ad for MTV -- when I was a kid.

-- A needle pushing in, boosting, drawing in blood.

SUSAN (V.O.)
Were you thinking about me?

-- A flame.

SI (V.O.)
This guy is, like, watching TV and there's a knock at the door.

-- The bottom of the soda can, it's contents bubbling.

SUSAN (V.O.)
Let's just see how excited you are.

-- A needle, again, pushing in -- injecting.

SI (V.O.)
He opens it. It's the Grim Reaper. He says, "It's time." The Guy tells him, though, that he's watching MTV. Mr. Death says, "Okay, I'll come back when it's over."

END MONTAGE

Shell pulls the needle from Dori's arm.

SI

The guy goes back and sits down in front of his TV and the screen says, "Music Television, twenty-four hours a day."

SUSAN

Oh, you are blessed.

SHELL

MTV sucks.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Susan exits the bedroom. Si, Bay, and Frank, follow.

Dori, now up, looks at 'em. Shell, as if not wanting to see them, looks away.

DORI

I wanna know everything.

BAY

We made love.

Si, to no one in particular:

SI

When I was 20 my girlfriend's hair dryer fell into the bathtub with me.

DORI

No, you didn't. You put your cock between her legs, that's all.

SI

It was on a shelf above the tub. It was plugged in. I heard it start to fall and I knew what it was.

DORI

You fucked her. Did you fuck her from behind?

SI

I tried to get my ass out ... before it hit.

SUSAN

Shut up!

SI
I just thought, this room is the
last thing I'm gonna see.

DORI
Was she on top? Did she sit on you?

BAY
No.

SI
At then it hit. I was halfway out.
That's as far as I got.

DORI
Did you like it?

SI
I was frozen, paralyzed -- like a
spastic statue.

DORI
We're you quivering?

SI
My girlfriend heard me scream and
ran in and unplugged me.

SHELL
That was nice of her.

DORI
Did she give you head?

Bay doesn't answer.

DORI
Did ya lick her?

BAY
No.

SI
We'd been fighting. She was really
pissed and she didn't even stop to
think it over, she just saved me.

DORI
Did it hurt?

SUSAN
No.

FRANK
You wanna see the tape?

DORI
It sounds boring.

Shell snuggles into Dori. The two kiss. Bay looks at 'em, watches 'em.

BAY
You're fine.

SHELL
Shut up.

BAY
Not you.

Dori looks, smiles.

SHELL
We don't fuck. Any one can fuck.

DORI
We make love.

Frank picks up his camera.

SHELL
Down boy!

Frank laughs.

Bay cuts another line on the coffee table.

SHELL
Finally.

BAY
Just enough for two.

Shell's shoulders slump.

SHELL
If you cooked it --

BAY
No.

Dori looks at Shell, sad eyed. She crosses her legs, one over the other in an attempt to entice her.

Shell looks away.

Dori's head drops.

Shell snorts a line.

SHELL

Damn!

Bay gets up, grabs Shell's hand. The two move to the bedroom.

Sue, high, nods off.

FRANK

She's out.

He says, lifting her hand, then dropping it.

SI

Got more.

DORI

What?

SI

Judas.

Dori smiles.

DORI

Heroin.

FRANK

A friend that betrays.

BEDROOM

Shell drops down onto the bed. Bay looks at her, admiring her body.

LIVING ROOM

Dori ties off.

BEDROOM

Bay, naked, is on top of Shell.

SHELL

No. I can't.

He kisses her.

SHELL
I shouldn't. It's ... No.

LIVING ROOM

Frank reaches into a box, pulling out an old, dust covered, Video tape.

SI
What is it?

FRANK
Daddy.

Si laughs.

A needle pushes into Dori's arm.

SI
Like kissing God.

Dori turns toward Frank. She leans into him.

Shell exits the bedroom as Dori kisses him.

SHELL
Dori!

Bay, buttoning his shirt, enters the living room.

Shell throws a hand up over her mouth, muffling a cry.

Dori smiles, laughs, moves to the center of the room, hikes her skirt up, moves toward bay -- the needle still stuck in her arm.

Bay reaches up under her skirt. The two dance.

Shell, crying, exits the apartment.

FRANK
That's enough!

Frank gets up, limps toward the two, separates 'em.

FRANK
(To Bay)
They'll be back together again
tomorrow.

BAY
I just wanna fuck.
(Looking at Susan)
And not some old lady.

FRANK
She's junked up. C'mon...

Frank grabs Dori's arm, directing her back to the couch.

Dori, Frank, Si, and Bay sit staring at nothing.

Beat.

BAY
I didn't fuck her. If that's what
you think.

FRANK
That's what I think.

He says, starting to nod off.

Si, already sleeping, leans into Frank -- starts to snore.

Bay looks at Dori.

BAY
Is that what you think, too?

Dori looks at him but doesn't answer.

BAY
Is it?

DORI
Yeah.

BAY
We'll, I didn't.

Bay moves in closer to her. She inches away.

BAY
I didn't fuck her.

DORI
Then I don't wanna fuck you.

Bay grabs her arm, twisting it.

BAY
C'mere.

He lifts her up.

DORI

No!

He covers her mouth. Her legs kick as he drags her into the:

BEDROOM

BAY

You're gonna fuck me.

Dori squirms beneath him.

BAY

You wanted to earlier.

DORI

No, I just, I wanted to hurt Shell.

BAY

Well, now I wanna hurt you.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

Dori's on her side, her back to Bay, curled up, quietly crying. Bay snores.

Dori, slowly, rolls off the bed onto the floor. She starts to crawl, moving toward the door. She reaches up, palming the knob.

LIVING ROOM

Still on her knees, she moves to the kitchen -- opens a drawer, grabs a knife. Rights herself, examines the knife's edge. It's sharp.

She crosses the living room to the:

BEDROOM

Bay's still sleeping, resting peacefully, his head against a pillow.

Dori spits on him.

DORI

Get up!

Bay stirs.

DORI

Get up!

She's says, louder.

Bay shakes his head, rubs an eye.

Dori, knife in hand, comes into focus.

BAY

Oh, shit.

He says, more annoyed than frightened.

LIVING ROOM

Si, awake, listens.

BEDROOM

BAY

What are you doing?

DORI

You wanted me to fuck you. Well,
now I'm gonna.

She lifts the knife, holding it in both hands above her head.

Then... suddenly, drives it down, plunging it into her gut.

BAY

Jesus Fuck!

Dori smiles. Laughs. She's still junked-up. She doesn't feel it.

Bay leaps up, wrestles it away from her.

Si enters, looks at Bay -- holding the knife.

SI

God! God! What did you do?

BAY

Nothing! I --

Bay drops the knife.

Si flips open a phone.

Bay lunges at him, knocking him to the floor. The two wrestle. Bay is bigger, stronger, he pins Si -- head-butts him, knocking him unconscious.

Bay exits the room, runs into Frank, sending him to the floor.

Frank's leg appears to be broke, it's twisted at an odd angle.

Susan, high, remains asleep.

Frank stands, repositions his "broken" leg.

BAY
I didn't do it! I didn't fuckin'
kill her!

FRANK
Kill her?!

BAY
I ...

He moves for the door.

Frank attempts to follow, but can't. His leg, a prosthetic, has come off.

Sirens sound.

BAY
Jesus! Fuck!

He yells, picking up Frank's prosthetic, hitting him with it.

BAY
Did you call the cops!? Did you!?

FRANK
No!

He hits him again.

BAY
Did you!

FRANK
The neighbors! We've got neighbors!

Bay tosses Frank's leg to the floor, then exits into the:

HALLWAY

The on again off again crackling static of police radios are heard moving up a stairwell.

Bay stumbles, zigzagging down the hall, grabbing at door knobs, trying, desperately, to find an unlocked apartment.

Finally, an unlocked door -- the same one Dori exited earlier.

Number 203.

Bay enters. It's dark. Black. Outside, OFFICERS pass, racing toward Shell's apartment.

Bay stumbles about, switches on a light.

BAY

Fuck! Fuck!

He screams.

Dori's mother lay dead on the floor, a pool of blood at her feet.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

A car, an old junker, pulls up along side several police cars.

INSIDE

Dori, seven, watches as two cops escort Bay from the building.

She looks at her mom.

MOTHER

It's over. No one is gonna hurt you.

THE END