

Heatstroke

written by

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OVERBLACK:

The ebb and flow of a high class restaurant kitchen.

POTS BANG. METAL SCRAPES AGAINST METAL.

CHEF LEE (V.O.)
Order up. 2 pork. 3 strip. Tuna.
Smoked oyster.

EVERYONE (V.O.)
Yes chef.

FADE IN:

INT. COQUILLE RESTAURANT. THE LINE - NIGHT

We push into a colosseum of polished aluminum - The line.
It's centre stage for chefs.

In the land of Michelin Stars and truffles by the pound
there's no time for excess. No chance for mistakes. It's a
constant battle against the woes of imperfection, a war that
some may never understand.

Kieran(27) Close cropped hair that's already started to grey,
cheeks sunken, last night escapades still written in the
dirty smudges of a 5 o'clock shadow. Sweat pours down his
forehead. His chef whites are wrinkled but pristine.

Kieran hefts a giant stock pot off of a 4 burner stove.

Swinging it up onto a counter ready to dump through a
chinois. Seafood stock swirls down into a 2L Cambro.

CRAIG(30's), balding, covered in tats, sharpie tucked into a
bandana.

Craig dates and slices carpenters tape on his spotless
station.

We swing past him. Over to:

AIKO(30) Hair tied behind a red bandana, half a neck tattoo
poking from her collar, her chef whites are pressed to
perfection.

Aiko expertly dices shallots with uncanny precision.

Sweeping red circlets off of her board into an ice bath.

This is the dance: one part chaos, one part calculation. It's loud, fast and intense.

Behind Aiko LINE COOKS(20's) move at a frenetic pace, basting, sautéing, portioning, prepping for the table to drop.

Meat, Fish, Garde manger, Saucier, Pâtissier. Kieran tosses his giant stock pot into the dish sink. Wiping his hands, he leaves the stock to cool.

KIERAN

Backs, backs, behind.

Kieran slips back onto the line.

AIKO

Chef. 2 pork. 1 tuna.

KIERAN

Chef.

Kieran ducks beneath the pass, digging into the prep station fridge, pulling a deli of pre-portioned Chantrelle mushrooms out, onto the counter.

Spinning behind him, he pulls a sauté pan off a shelf banging it down onto the range.

Flames jump as Kieran maxes the burner. The pan sizzles steel contracting.

Kieran slips a spoon from his apron, digging into a pat of butter - he flicks it into the pan.

In go the mushrooms - **CHSSSSSS** - The Chantrelle's golden ridges tumble as Kieran pitches them end over end.

Kieran pokes at the lean side of a dribbling hunk of pork belly, fingers pressing gently, using the firmness to judge the cook - not quite there.

AIKO carefully slices a fist-sized round of thick fatty tuna, it's exterior seared golden brown, rolled in black sesame seeds and ground black pepper. As Aiko cuts into the tuna we see the inside - par cooked, still a beautiful vibrant red, interspersed with faint spiralling veins of fat.

CHEF LEE (O.S.)

How long on tuna?

AIKO

3, chef.

Aiko carefully rolls the tuna,

AIKO (CONT'D)
Onions please chef.

A HARRIED LINE COOK(20s) fresh faced, sweating profusely carrying a sauté pan

HARRIED LINE COOK
(shouting)
Behind - hot.

Sliding the pan onto a folded rag next to Aiko. Aiko grabs a pair of chopsticks carefully lifting shimmering soy-soaked onions into a blue glazed saucer.

CHEF LEE (35) Tall, thin, scruffy beard, man bun. He taps his pen impatiently on the pass.

Chef Lee watches Aiko, his face stoney.

The receipt ticker beeps loudly before beginning its printing cycle.

BEEP BEEP BEEP

Chef Lee watches the orders as they print, an eyebrow raised.

AIKO
2 minutes chef.

CHEF LEE
Greens?

DAMON(30s) the kitchens Garde Manger who handles salads and cold entrées, Damon can barely fit in the kitchen he's so built.

DAMON
Flying.

CHEF LEE
Tuna?

AIKO
1 minute chef.

Chef Lee frowns.

CHEF LEE
Pork?

KIERAN
3 minutes chef.

CHEF LEE
You have 2.

KIERAN
Yes chef.

Chef Lee frowns reading the orders.

CHEF LEE
Order up. 2 pork 1 tuna, smoked
oysters, bouillabaisse.

EVERYONE
Yes CHEF.

Chef Lee walks off muttering.

CHEF LEE
(to: an unseen front of
house)
What's with the frigging
substitution. KEN. What the fuck is
going on out there.

KEN (O.S.)
Severe shellfish allergy.

CHEF LEE
Ken, can they not read?

KEN (O.S.)
Chef I have no clue.

CHEF LEE
It's on the sign Ken. This isn't a
steakhouse.

KEN (O.S.)
No Chef

CHEF LEE
Could you PLEASE clear up that
confusion for them.

Aiko and Kieran exchange a look.

Kieran grabs a sauté pan off the stove, kicking open the
stove with a bang, shoving a screaming pan into the oven.

AIKO
You good K?

KIERAN
Golden.

AIKO
Damon?

DAMON
How many pork was it?

AIKO
2 chef.

DAMON
YA-ouai

The ticker starts beeping, printing more orders.

Aiko reaches over the pass snatching them before they can hit the deck.

AIKO
Order up, 2 sirloin, croquettes,
Nicoise, 3 soto.

EVERYONE
Yes chef.

Aiko carefully places micro greens over the seared tuna before sprinkling spiced daikon flakes over the fish - grabbing a tiny clay pot Aiko drips midnight black ponzu over the dish.

AIKO
Light on those greens please Damon.
They're getting soggy.

Aiko spins the plate wiping the edges with a napkin.

AIKO (CONT'D)
Service!

DAMON
What?

AIKO
Go light on your greens please
chef.

Damon peaks his head back around the corner unsure. Chef lee stomps back behind the pass face redder than when he'd left. He wipes a dripping forehead with a scarred hand.

CHEF LEE
We're getting killed out there.

KIERAN
Yes chef.

Kieran kicks open the oven pulling a steaming pork belly out onto the deck. He scoops it onto his board tossing the pan under his station.

CHEF LEE
Pork pork pork.

KIERAN
20 chef.

Kieran slices against the grain lifting them onto the plate splaying them out in a circle. Kieran turns reaching for a second pan, placing it beside him Kieran carefully lifts golden Chantrelle's onto his board slicing them - onto the plate they go - dribbled with Demi-glaze - finished with a sprinkle of Tobiko.

KIERAN (CONT'D)
2 pork.

Kieran slides two plates up onto the pass.

CHEF LEE
Hm.
(beat)
Service please.

A WAITER(30s) white shirt pressed, hair braided, silk napkin over an elbow. She grabs the food off the pass.

AIKO
1 tuna, 1 smoked oysters.

There's a crash from the back side of the line.

DAMON
Fuck.

AIKO
What's happening chef.

DAMON
Need a sec on oysters.

Chef Lee shakes his head. Aiko slips dishes up onto the pass. Kieran turns ladling stock from his station into a sauce pan. In goes clams, muscles, chopped leeks, potatoes and celery and a bouquet garni - Onto the stove it goes.

CHEF LEE
Garde manger???

DAMON
Yes chef.

CHEF LEE
Where- is- my- salad.

DAMON
Coming chef.

CHEF LEE
We don't have all week chef.

DAMON
Yes chef.

AIKO
Chef I need greens.

DAMON
Yes chef.

Kieran tosses two striploins onto the grill they spit and sizzle. Chef Lee's pen tapping grows more intense.

CHEF LEE
Hows that tuna coming?

AIKO
Waiting on greens.

DAMON
1 minute chef.

AIKO
I can go in 1.

CHEF LEE
Hows the meat?

KIERAN
2 minutes chef.

CHEF LEE
No, take your time Damon. We have so much time to waste.

DAMON
Coming chef.

CHEF LEE
Damon, do you know the difference between 2 stars and 1 star.

DAMON
No chef.

CHEF LEE

It's the same as the distance
between medium and well done.

(pause)

15 second.

DAMON

Yes chef.

CHEF LEE

it's been 15 seconds Damon. Where
are my oysters.

AIKO

Chef.

Damon rushes over to Aiko's station tossing an aluminum bowl
of micro greens onto her station. Water splashes.

CHEF LEE

The tuna's warming, the pork is
cooling. Where are my oysters.

DAMON

(starting to panic)

2 chef.

CHEF LEE

15 seconds. Fire Nicoise. Fire
brulé

AIKO

Chef.

Damon too busy shucking doesn't hear. Chef Lee's pen tapping
reaches it's peak.

Kieran flips his steaks tossing his tongs aside. He moves
towards Damon's station.

KIERAN

Backs. Backs.

Kieran taps Aiko on the arm. It's an unspoken moment he's
going to go put out the fire cover me. Damon ducks pulling
open the cooler, in his rush deli's tumble out onto the floor
rolling everywhere. Kieran bends down. Picking up rogue
deli's.

KIERAN (CONT'D)

What'd you need?

DAMON

Nicoise

AIKO
Bouille base coming up.

CHEF LEE
Hold on that. We're still waiting.
For fat Albert to take his finger
out.

AIKO
Yes Chef.

DAMON
Oysters chef.

Damon shucks his last oyster. Sprinkling chives - adding a single drop of chili oil. Before whisking them towards the pass.

Kieran tosses the salad with practiced ease. Finishing it with a single squeeze of fresh lemon.

CHEF LEE
What is this...?

DAMON
Uh.

CHEF LEE
What is this?

DAMON
Oysters chef.

CHEF LEE
You hand me this. Are you joking?

Damon glances between Lee's red face and the perfect plate confused.

DAMON
I can fix it chef.

Damon turns to walk away.

CHEF LEE
(dangerously quiet)
Don't you walk away from me while
i'm still **speaking**.

DAMON
Yes chef.

CHEF LEE
Explain this to me.

DAMON
I, I, I, I, left them in the
broiler for too long-

Chef Lee processes for a moment - his face growing redder and
redder until-- he explodes.

CHEF LEE
Get out- GET OUT- GET OUT-

DAMON
Chef please.

CHEF LEE
No you and your fat fingers have
done enough fucking damage.
(beat)
CRAIG.

CRAIG
Yes chef.

CHEF LEE
I need you on garde.

Damon stands there shocked.

CHEF LEE (CONT'D)
Don't just fucking stand there with
your mouth open you freak. You come
to my kitchen and do this.

Damon flinches.

CHEF LEE (CONT'D)
You disgust me. Creatures like you,
disgust me. Filth. You don't
deserve that coat. You don't
deserve that station. I've fucking
dragged your dead weight long
enough Damon. I would kill myself
if I was as useless as you. Your a
fucking disgrace. A fucking tumour-

AIKO
(pushing a plate onto the
pass)
Service chef.

CHEF LEE
(pointing at Aiko)
Shut your fucking mouth.
(taking a deep breath)
Service please.

There's a pause - nothing happens/

CHEF LEE (CONT'D)
Do I have to do fucking everything
around here.
(he screams)
SERVICE.

KEN(30s) Rushes towards the pass, clean shaven, nice suit, he
wipes sweat off his brow.

He reaches for the plates - Chef Lee intercepts him grabbing
him by his collar pushing him against the pass.

CHEF LEE (CONT'D)
This isn't a fucking buffet when I
ask for service I expect FUCKING
SERVICE.
(Ken's eyes widen)
Understood?

KEN
Yes chef.

CHEF LEE
How long on meat?

Kieran shakes his head.

KIERAN
2 minutes chef.

A HARRIED WAITER(20s) jogs into into the kitchen and freezes
seeing Lee hand gripping the front of house manager by the
neck.

CHEF LEE
What the fuck are you staring at.

HARRIED WAITER
Nothing.

CHEF LEE
Your fucking fired.

HARRIED WAITER
Yes chef.

CHEF LEE
Are you stupid.

HARRIED WAITER
No chef.

The harried waiter quickly grabs the plates before pushing out onto the floor. Lee let's Ken go. Ken dashes out the door.

CHEF LEE
Wheres my fucking TUNA.

AIKO
1 minute chef.

DAMON
Tuna coming.

Aiko plates hands shaking. She misses her slice nicking the corner of her thumb. She tosses the plate up onto the pass.

AIKO
Tuna chef.

Chef Lee looks at it for a moment before shaking his head.

CHEF LEE
What, is, this?

AIKO
Tuna chef.

CHEF LEE
What's wrong with this image.

Lee shoves the plate uncomfortably close to her face

CHEF LEE (CONT'D)
Tell me.

AIKO
I don't know.

CHEF LEE
What a joke.

Lee grabs a slice of tuna with his bare hands.

CHEF LEE (CONT'D)
What do you call this cut.

AIKO
(taking a minute)
Not perfect.

CHEF LEE
Than why did you put it in front of me.

AIKO
We're behind.

CHEF LEE
And why are we behind.

AIKO
We aren't good enough.

CHEF LEE
No child it's you, you aren't good
enough.
(beat)
Do you hear me. You, are not good
enough. Take that fucking coat off.

Aiko moves to unbutton her coat but she hesitates.

CHEF LEE (CONT'D)
What did I say.

AIKO
What?

CHEF LEE
WHAT ARE YOU!

AIKO
(halting)
I am not good enough.

CHEF LEE
Say it like you mean it.

AIKO
I AM NOT GOOD ENOUGH.

Kieran's mouth moves like he wants to say something. But he doesn't. Aiko's upper lip starts to tremble.

CHEF LEE
Are you gonna cry?

AIKO
No chef.

CRASH. CHEF LEE launches the plate over Aiko's head. Aiko ducks her head and runs off the line. Kieran watches her go.

CHEF LEE
Good riddance.
(without missing a beat)
Order up. 2 oysters.

CRAIG

Yes chef.

Craig slides to plates of oysters up onto the pass. Kieran meets him with 2 plates of sirloin.

CHEF LEE

Order up 1 chop one scollops 3
green 1 sesame 1 Caesar.

EVERYONE

Yes chef.

INT. COQUILLE. THE LINE - NIGHT

Chef Lee stands back straight arms crossed. Service is finished. Kieran and Craig work elbow to elbow cleaning each and every station. Chef Lee just watches.

CHEF LEE

Good work everyone.

He turns on his heel and vanishes.

INT. STAFF BATHROOM - NIGHT

Kieran stares at himself in the mirror. He doesn't like what he sees.

INT. COQUILLE. STAFF ROOM - NIGHT

A row of school sized lockers. Each labelled by name. A single bench. In the corner a giant collection of everyones nonslip shoes.

Kieran sweat-stained and exhausted grabs his bag out of his locker. He glances at Aiko's locker for a moment than at Damon's the door flung open, locker empty. Kieran shoulders his backpack, unbuttons his stained chefs coat tossing it over his shoulder kicking off his nonslips and trading them for pair of beat up air forces.

EXT. COQUILLE. BACK ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Kieran steps out into the gloomy alley. There's a metal grate fence that surrounds the Coquilles back entrance. Kieran bends down pulling his bike out from behind the dumpster.

Rolling it out into the alleyway Kieran stops. Sous chef Craig leans against the corner puffing away on a sputtering Marlboro.

CRAIG
 (offering a cig)
 You want one.

Kieran sighs. Looking between the long road home and Craig. Nodding. Kieran precariously leans his bike against the brickwork.

Accepting the proffered cigarette. He leans over as Craigs beat up zippo struggles to light. Taking a pensive puff.

Leaning back, taking in the tranquility of the city that never sleeps.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
 Whats got you all stressed homie?

Kieran snorts.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
 It's just unusual.

Kieran takes a long drag.

CRAIG (CONT'D)
 None of my business. Just felt like it had to be said.

KIERAN
 (taking a puff)
 Where do I even start..

CRAIG
 We don't have all night.

KIERAN
 Prick.

Craig chuckles.

KIERAN (CONT'D)
 What are we doing man.

CRAIG
 (sarcastic)
 Living the dream.

KIERAN
 Is it a dream or nightmare.

CRAIG
 Little bit of both.

KIERAN

The longer I stick it out the more
I feel like I'm not cut out for
this.

CRAIG

Well than quit.

Kieran shakes his head.

KIERAN

I don't think I can.

CRAIG

Attaboy. You'll figure it hope.

KIERAN

I hope your right.

CRAIG

And here I thought you and the goth
girl were fighting.

KIERAN

Fuck off.

Craig considers Kieran for a moment. Before clapping him on
the shoulder. Digging into his jacket with a frown. Offering
him the pack of Cigarettes.

CRAIG

Sounds like you need em more than i
do.

KIERAN

I quit.

CRAIG

Hows that going for you.

KIERAN

You're a fucking enabler.

CRAIG

Sounds like i'm the least of your
problems.

Craig flicks the butt down into the gutter.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

Get some sleep kid.

Offering Kieran a jaunty wave before jogging out onto the
road. Flagging down a cab.

INT. KIERAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A tiny New York closet - 2500 USD a month for a bed, a two burner stove and a loft with 3 ft of headroom.

Kieran lies in bed, the gleam of his phone lighting his face. The phone rings. Kieran answers.

KIERAN

Hello?

(beat)

Dad?

(beat)

What's up?

We push backwards slowly.

KIERAN (CONT'D)

Jesus. Is he okay?

(beat)

Is it bad?

(beat)

Dad. Dad. i'm sure everything's fine.

Kieran sits up bashing his head on the ceiling.

KIERAN (CONT'D)

(rubbing his forehead)

How long does he have?

(beat)

Okay.

(beat)

Fuck.

Kieran flops backwards onto the bed. Phone falling from his hand.

INT. KIERAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Kieran sits at his tiny kitchen table.

KIERAN

Hey chef, I know it's late but I just got a call from back home i'm gonna have to take a few personals. Family emergency.

EXT. JFK. SECURITY - DAY

Kieran tosses his bag onto the rollers. Pulling his shoes off.

EXT. YVR. TAXI RANK - NIGHT

Lines of passengers shuffle with suitcases down a seemingly never ending line. Kieran checks his phone - 26 missed calls from (boss).

Kieran eyes the end of the line it still isn't moving. He digs into his pocket pulling out the beat up pack of Marlboros. Patting his pockets for a lighter.

The light flickers off the inside of his palm as he takes a drag.

A WOMAN IN A PUFFER JACKET(30s) gives him the evil eye.

WOMAN IN A PUFFER JACKET

Excuse me.

She points towards a giant no smoking sign. Kieran grimaces.

KIERAN

Sorry.

Taking a final drag before stubbing it out with the toe of his nikes.

Puffer jacket woman turns blowing a giant cloud of vape smoke into the wind.

A car pulls up in front of Kieran he drags his suitcase towards the trunk.

EXT. JER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Kieran knocks on the door. There's a pause before it opens. JER(50s) stringy black hair, sharp jawline, plaid button up.

JER

You made it.

KIERAN

Hi dad.

JER

You look skinny.

KIERAN

Thanks.

JER

Come-in.

INT. JER'S HOUSE. KIERANS ROOM - NIGHT

Kieran's old room clearly hasn't changed since he moved out at 18. It's stuck in 2012. Kieran spins on an aging office chair. His phone propped against a mug. Aiko smiles back at him from the screen.

AIKO
You really know how to pick your moments.

KIERAN
Your welcome.

AIKO
How is it?

KIERAN
Not great.

AIKO
I thought you hated him.

KIERAN
I do. But he's you know.

Aiko plays dead.

KIERAN (CONT'D)
(laughing)
That's fucked up.

AIKO
That's rich coming from you.

KIERAN
You doing okay.

AIKO
Yeah. Chef forgot all about my fuck up. Thanks to you.

KIERAN
I'm fucked aren't I.

AIKO
That psycho loves you. You'll be fine. Roasted in combi. But alive.

KIERAN
Thanks for your support.

INT. JER'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. - DAY

Kieran walks down the stairs, rubbing his eyes.

JER
Sleeping beauty rises.

KIERAN
Morning.

JER
Its 12:45 relax.

Jer digs a frozen pizza out of the freezer unpacking it slowly before tossing into the oven.

JER (CONT'D)
I may not be on your level son, but
I still got it.

Kieran shakes his head.

JER (CONT'D)
You okay if we go see him. After
this.

KIERAN
Ready as i'll ever be.

INT./EXT. JER'S CAR - DAY

Kieran and jer sit in silence staring out the cracked windscreen.

JER
I'm gonna park can you run in. 12th
floor, room 1227

INT. VANCOUVER GENERAL HOSPITAL. ELEVATOR - DAY

Kieran steps into elevator. Posters that are intended to be happy with big smiling animals glare at him. Kieran shifts uncomfortable.

EXT. VANCOUVER GENERAL HOSPITAL. 12TH FLOOR - DAY

Kieran steps out of the elevator. Onto a floor teaming with people in scrubs. He isn't quite sure where he's supposed to be going. Kieran approaches the nurses station.

KIERAN

Excuse me.

SADIE(28) Pink scrubs, birth mark under her left eye, blonde hair tucked into braids that frame a tired face.

SADIE

(not paying attention)

Yeah.

KIERAN

Sorry I was just wondering if you could point in the direction of room 1227

SADIE

Who are you?

KIERAN

Family.. Grandson actually.

SADIE

Name..

KIERAN

Kieran.

Sadie looks up.

SADIE

(recognizing him)

Kieran??

KIERAN

Sadie?

SADIE

(she leans in)

Dude what the fuck. You didn't tell me you we're in town.

KIERAN

It was pretty last minute.

SADIE

I haven't seen you in years.

KIERAN

Small world huh.

SADIE

Jenna's not gonna believe this.

KIERAN
Jenna. Wow. that brings me back.
Hows she doing?

SADIE
Married, two kids.

KIERAN
Wow that's amazing.

SADIE
She got really christian after..
(she motions towards him)
After you guys went.
(sadie mimes an explosion)

KIERAN
Uh.

SADIE
What about you.

KIERAN
I'm doing okay.

SADIE
You still working at that fancy
place?

KIERAN
Yep. Still going strong. I didn't
know you we're working here.

SADIE
We aren't 23 anymore Kieran.

There's an awkward pause.

SADIE (CONT'D)
Well what brings you to my little
neck of the woods.

KIERAN
Family unfortunately.

SADIE
I'm sorry.

KIERAN
Why, you didn't put him here.

Sadie snorts. She stands motioning him to follow her.

INT. VANCOUVER GENERAL HOSPITAL. ROOM 1227 - DAY

Sadie pulls open the door.

SADIE

If you need anything just let me know.

KIERAN

Thanks.

The room is dark the view out the window grey, the tv was brand new in 1995, the steady beat of a heart beat monitor eerie. In the middle of it all. MATTY SPEIER(80)Lies back eyes closed, he's gaunt, his white hair thin. His bony hands are clasped around his wife MONICA's(43) she sits half in a chair her head leaning on his shoulder. Monica is noticeably younger than her aging husband, her pantsuit ruffled eyes puffy.

MONICA

Kieran. You made it.

Kieran stands, awkwardly shifting on his toes.

KIERAN

Yep.

Matty avoids eye contact

MONICA

When did you get in?

KIERAN

Late last night.

MONICA

How was your flight?

KIERAN

Bumpy.

Silence.

KIERAN (CONT'D)

How's he doing?

Monica looks at him for what feels like 20 seconds. Before swiping a tear off her cheek.

MONICA

Not great.

Kieran doesn't know what to say.

There's a commotion from outside the room. Jer pulls open the door.

JER

You would not believe the price of parking in this place. It's robbery i'm telling you-

KIERAN

Dad-

JER

I tried to find that thing you we're asking for Monica but I couldn't. So I brought ice cream.

MONICA

Ice cream????

JER

Yeah, he loves ice cream.

MONICA

Honey we talked with the nurse about this.

MATTY

I don't a give a shit what that fat bitch thinks.

KIERAN

Excuse me?

MATTY

You heard me.

KIERAN

Jesus christ.

JER

Relax kiddo he's only joking. Right pops.

MATTY

(he's not)

Sure.

JER

Isn't this cool getting the boys back together.

(silence.)

Guys come-on.

KIERAN
I'm glad your doing okay.

MATTY
Doing okay- okay he says. Look at
me, do I look friggin okay.

Kieran shakes his head moving towards a chair that's propped
in the farthest corner from Matty.

JER
Hey, once you get a load of some of
this mango passion fruit than
you'll be right as rain.

MONICA
Awe it's so nice to see you boys
having fun.

She stands grabbing her bags.

KIERAN
Are you leaving?

MONICA
(looking to jer)
He didn't tell you?

KIERAN
Tell me what?

JER
She's got things to sort out so
we're gonna watch over old gramps
for the afternoon.

KIERAN
(it's not great)
Great.

Monica plants a wet kiss on Matty's cheek.

MONICA
Call me if anything happens.

She grabs her things and heads for the door.

KIERAN
I'll walk you out.

Kieran heads for the door.

INT. VANCOUVER GENERAL HOSPITAL. ELEVATOR - DAY

Monica pulls out her phone as they step into the hell-elevator

MONICA

Hi, yeah this is Monica Speier
yeah. This is the BC nurses union
right?

(silence.)

Good. Wonderful.

(silence)

I need to lodge a complaint.

(silence)

Against a series of nurses.

(silence)

There's quite a few names. Do you
have a pen to hand.

Kieran watches her out of the corner of his eye, horrified.
The elevator arrives at the lobby. Monica steps out offering
Kieran a brief wave before beeline out the front door.

EXT. VANCOUVER GENERAL HOSPITAL. FRONT STEPS - DAY

Kieran smokes a cigarette hood up against the rain. In
background we see a set of sliding doors open. A figure in
pink scrubs walking off to the right. Just as it's about to
exit frame. The figure stops. Turning slow. Considering
before moving towards Kieran. Kieran takes another drag.

SADIE

I thought you quit.

Kieran looks up surprised.

KIERAN

Jesus. You tryna give me a heart
attack.

SADIE

Couldn't have picked a better spot.

KIERAN

(laughing)

You really haven't changed have
you.

SADIE

(avoiding the question)

You doing okay? I know you guys had
a complicated relationship.

KIERAN
 (chuckling)
 Complicated.

SADIE
 You wanna grab something to eat.

KIERAN
 I can't- I've gotta go back.

SADIE
 I think they'll survive without
 you.

KIERAN
 I wish I had your confidence.

SADIE
 It's not confidence it's cynicism.

She pauses for a moment considering Kieran. He can't look her
 in the eye.

SADIE (CONT'D)
 Well. Have fun. Than. It was nice
 seeing you again.

Sadie takes the steps two at a time. Keycard jangling the
 whole way down.

Kieran watches her. For a long moment. He stands.

KIERAN
 Now hold your horses there pal.

INT. CHICKEN SHOP - DAY

It's a tiny hole in the wall place, neon signs cover the
 front entrance, the menu flickers on a dying tv. Fried
 chicken sits under heat lamps slowly wilting. Kieran chomps
 happily on a chicken leg. Sadie watches him mildly concerned.
 She picks occasionally at her basket of fries.

SADIE
 How long are you staying?

KIERAN
 How long do you think he's got?

SADIE
 Probably not long.

KIERAN
This chickens fucking fantastic.

Sadie sits back. Silence.

KIERAN (CONT'D)
What's up. Why so serious.

SADIE
He's dying Kieran.

KIERAN
I'm aware.

SADIE
It's okay to not be okay.

KIERAN
You changed your hair.

SADIE
Trying something new.

KIERAN
Hows what his name?

SADIE
Who?

KIERAN
James?

Sadie shrugs.

KIERAN (CONT'D)
You really aren't giving anything
away are you.

SADIE
There's not much to say.

KIERAN
Bullshit. There's always something
going on in your life.

SADIE
Not anymore.

KIERAN
That's dark.

SADIE
I forgot how exhausting it is
talking to you.

KIERAN
Ouch, look really i'm fine. I'm
moisturized, locked in, sticking in
my lane.

SADIE
Why are you smoking again.

KIERAN
I had a tough week a work.

SADIE
Fair enough.

KIERAN
isn't this the part where your
supposed to lecture me.

SADIE
It's your life.

KIERAN
Are you mad at me?

Sadie crosses her arms. Kieran stops eating.

KIERAN (CONT'D)
I'm sorry.

SADIE
You don't even know what to be
sorry for.

KIERAN
I can guess.

SADIE
Can you?

KIERAN
What do you want me to say.

SADIE
Lets not rehash this.

KIERAN
Rehash what.

SADIE
I'm tired Kieran.

KIERAN
Can we start again.

SADIE

No. This isn't a rom com Kieran.

KIERAN

Woah woah woah.

SADIE

You know I imagined this conversation going different. I'll see you around Kieran.

Sadie's chair screeches. Kieran watches her go.

INT. VANCOUVER GENERAL HOSPITAL. ROOM 1227 - DAY

Kieran sits in the corner of the room, his eyes fixed on the view of the Vancouver skyline. In the background Jer gesticulates animatedly to an unimpressed Matty.

JER

It's like these guys they just don't get it. They're laying old stock CPVC against the grade. Like are these guys stupid or what. Disaster. I couldn't believe it, the contractor called, can you believe it guy calls me, and guess who it is, it's fuckin Scotty Pistone. You remember Scotty don't you, Vinny's kid.

MATTY

Vinny fuckin Pistone.
(shaking his head)
That fuck wouldn't even be in business without me. I fucking carried his bumbling ass for too long. Guy was worse than this fuckin tumour.

JER

You should see scotty spitting friggin image, 42 inch waste guy looks like friggin an astronaut. Wifes a frigging dime piece though, looks like a that chick from Grey's anatomy with too much lip filler.

MATTY

Your too easy on these guys.

JER

Pops i'm doing my best. But they aren't my guys. They're your guys.

MATTY

Well the way looks they ain't gonna be my guys for much longer.

JER

Come-on pops why you gotta get all morbid on me. You'll pull through, i know it.

MATTY

You know it.

Jer stands-

JER

I'm gonna take a piss, watch the old guy for me son, make sure he don't run off with any of the nurses.

Jer Elbows Matty.

MATTY

They should be so lucky.

Jer steps out of the room. Kieran and Matty face off.

MATTY (CONT'D)

So. You still working for that queer?

KIERAN

Sorry?

MATTY

That cocksucker with pony tail.

KIERAN

Yeah i'm still working for him.

MATTY

You know it amazes me how much of a fucking pussy you are.

Kieran shrugs.

MATTY (CONT'D)

You get it from your mother. Stuck up cunt.

KIERAN

What's your fucking problem.

MATTY

You your my fucking problem. You need to step up. I'm not gonna be here forever.

KIERAN

(laughing)

I'm good. Really. I think you guys will be fine without me.

MATTY

You spit in my face. Like I didn't give you people everything. I worked myself to the fucking bone, just so you could have a little something. and you throw it away. You throw it away for what? So you can suck some new york queers dick for 13.25 an hour.

KIERAN

i'm not taking this. Not anymore.

Kieran heads for the door. Just as it swings in.

JER

Where are you going.

KIERAN

I'm not spending one more fucking minute with that fucking monster.

EXT. VGH - NIGHT

Kieran storms out of the hospital. Face red hands stuck in his pockets, muttering to himself. He pulls out his phone and makes a call.

CRAIG

(filtered)

Hey wassup?

KIERAN

Do you ever wonder what the hell we're doing.

CRAIG

Ever day.

KIERAN

Like what is the fucking point of all this.

CRAIG

I don't think there is a point man.

KIERAN

You know i've spent years of my life. Years. Throwing every piece of myself into this dream every ounce of passion, i've chewed up my decency and my dignity for something, something I don't even think I believe in anymore.

Craig sighs.

CRAIG

Look is this about service?

KIERAN

I dunno man. I just don't know. Like be real with me after 8 years of working what do you really have to show for it.

CRAIG

Knowledge, skills, expertise, nerves of steel.

KIERAN

At what cost?

CRAIG

Look no-ones gonna write love letters to Lee or give him a mug with best boss ever on it.

KIERAN

You can say that again.

CRAIG

He's forgotten more than you or I will probably ever know.

KIERAN

But like what the fuck does that say about us?

CRAIG

Excellence isn't just given away, it has a price and some people just aren't willing to pay it.

KIERAN

I don't fucking know man, it's funny you know I just imagined somehow that things would be different for me. No matter how stupid it may be, I knew the odds. I should have expected it. I practically asked for it. You know I watch my friends graduating from college with there stupid fucking communications degrees and I can't help but feel like maybe I made a huge mistake.

CRAIG

Look I know it may not seem like it now. But one day you'll look back on this moment when your a C.D.C at some 3 star place in greenich, with your pounds of caviar and you'll realize-

KIERAN

Realize what, that I sold my soul to the devil just so I can fight over the crumbs. How do you know we won't just become exactly like him?

CRAIG

We won't man. We won't.

KIERAN

How do you know. Everyone thinks there the hero in they're own story. But it's bullshit. There are no hero's and villains just broken people repeating the sins of the parents decaying slowly, until we grow old and cynical trapped in a never ending cycle of entropy working shit jobs, for fucked wages on shitty futons - our bodies riddled with cancer. All because we dreamed a little too big. It's not binary can't be great and decent to. It's not one or the other. Right. Right?

CRAIG

I wish I had an answer for you man.

Silence.

CRAIG (CONT'D)

I've gotta be up for 5 brother, see you soon?

KIERAN

Yeah man. See you soon. Thanks.

Click. Kieran stares up at the night sky. Breath billowing into the night. He starts walking. A text pops up

JER: Where are you?

Kieran: Need a sec.

EXT. SEA WALL - NIGHT

Kieran steps off the bus. Crossing the street. Couples walk arm in arm. A young man scarfs down a hotdog on a street corner. Kieran hands in his pockets continues his journey. He spots something in the distance. It's a rickety hot dog stand. Manned by DONALD(70s) Hunched backed, big round glasses, big smile.

Kieran watches him flip onions, slice smokies and laugh with a customer.

EXT. SEAWALL. HOTDOG STAND - NIGHT

Kieran approaches.

DONALD

What's up bossman.

KIERAN

Could I grab a dog.

DONALD

Of course. Mustard, Relish, onions?

KIERAN

Sure man.

DONALD

You look like a man of culture you want me to make it a special.

KIERAN

I'd love that.

DONALD

Coming right up.

KIERAN
How long you been doing this?

DONALD
Oh it's almost 29 years.

KIERAN
Wow. How do you do it?

DONALD
Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a
mystery, thats why we call it the
present-

KIERAN
Isn't that from-

DONALD
Kung fu panda. My nephews favorite.

Donald squeezes terriyaki dressing over the hot god
sprinkling Tobiko and sesame seeds before proffering it to
Kieran.

DONALD (CONT'D)
For you bossman.

KIERAN
Thanks.

RING RING RING

KIERAN (CONT'D)
How much?

Donald smiles.

DONALD
I don't charge for advice.
(beat)
Take your call bossman. I'll still
be here.

Kieran smiles. Kieran's phone flashes up - Chef Lee (boss) is
calling.

KIERAN
Hello?

CHEF LEE
(filtered)
Look what the cat dragged in.

KIERAN
What do you want?

CHEF LEE
I need you here in 20. Or your
done.

KIERAN
Brother, I'm not even in the
country.

CHEF LEE
Sounds like a personal problem.

Kieran busts out laughing.

CHEF LEE (CONT'D)
What's so funny?

Tears of laughter stream from Kierans face.

KIERAN
Nothing bossman. Absolutely
nothing.

CHEF LEE
I will fire you right here right
now you hear me?

Kieran doubles over laughing.

KIERAN
I needed this.

CHEF LEE
WHAT THE FUCK IS SO FUNNY.

KIERAN
Sorry what'd you say.

CHEF LEE
I SAID WHAT THE FUCK DID YOU THINKK
IS SO FUNNY.

KIERAN
You know I used to be so scared of
you.

CHEF LEE
You're done.

KIERAN
I really used to. But now I realize
your just a bitter angry man.
(MORE)

KIERAN (CONT'D)

Who will never be good enough. And you know what good fucking riddance Chef. I wish you nothing but success and good health.

The line goes dead. Kieran laughs. He keeps walking.

EXT. SEA WALL. HOT DOG STAND - NIGHT

Kieran returns to Donald's cart.

KIERAN

That was incredible.

DONALD

I do my best.

KIERAN

(passing him a 20)

Thanks.

Donald just smiles.

EXT. SEA WALL - NIGHT

Kieran stares at his phone.

Aiko: Dude wtf did you just do.

Kieran stares out at the ocean at the infinite rolling waves. He picks swipes through his phone bringing it to his ear.

KIERAN

Hey, Sadie. Uh. There's a long and painful list of things i've fucked up in my life. Partly from being a coward partly from being an asshole. I uh know it doesn't really mean much but, for what it's worth i'm sorry for just leaving. You know I just, i've spent my whole life afraid. Afraid of who I am, afraid of what I can do, afraid of becoming like, like, like my dad I guess. I just thought I needed a clean break, and that wasn't fair to you. But i've realized that maybe all I needed to do was uh, not be such an idiot.

CUT TO BLACK: