

V I C T I M

by

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Reg. WGAw

FADE IN:

EXT. LA CIENEGA BLVD - DAY

An old Honda Accord makes its way through LA traffic.

EXT. PICO BLVD - DAY

The Accord pulls to a stop and parks at a street meter. The door opens as TOM BRYNE (31), clean-cut, gets out. He heads down the sidewalk and stops outside a CHECK CASHING STORE...

INT. CHECK CASHING STORE - MOMENTS LATER

Tom fills out a WIRE TRANSFER form on the side counter...

EXT. PICO BLVD - LATER

Tom steps out of the check cashing store, and dials a number on his cell phone. A moment later...

TOM
(East London accent)
It's me, Tommy.
(a long beat)
Yeah, I just wired the money... it should be in your account in a few days.
(beat)
Yeah, yeah... don't worry, it's fine.
(beat)
I'll make do.
(beat)
Yeah... I know. Me too.
(beat)
Alright then...
(beat)
Bye Dad.

Tom hangs up, and walks around the building to the rear alley...

EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Tom enters the alley where his Accord is parked next to a cargo van. As he heads over to it...

JACK (O.S.)
(London accent)
Excuse me...

Tom turns around curiously, and sees JACK KANE (mid 30s), clean-cut, lanky.

JACK (CONT'D)
You got the time?

Tom studies Jack, almost suspiciously...

TOM
You're English.

JACK
(smiles uncomfortably)
Yeah. What are the odds, right?

TOM
(smirks)
In this city? You'd be surprised.

Tom pulls out his phone. On the LOCK SCREEN, the time reads "2:06 PM".

TOM (CONT'D)
(looks up from phone)
It's five past two.

In the phone's reflection, Tom sees the CARGO DOOR on the van slide open, as a FIGURE reaches out from within...

JACK (O.S.)
Thanks mate...

A HAND puts a chloroform dowsed rag in Tom's face! He tries to struggle for a moment, but is quickly subdued, as the world begins to blur and dim...

FADE TO BLACK:

TITLE: "VICTIM"

The ENGINE sound of a moving car can be heard in the background...

FADE IN:

INT. CARGO VAN - LATE AFTERNOON

Tom regains consciousness in the back of the van, his eyes struggling to adjust. He orients himself and sits up in confusion. Up front, Jack sits behind the wheel. Through the windshield, a desert landscape passes by at high speed...

In the cargo area, KEVIN KANE (29), sits at an angle with his back to Tom, his hoodie covering most of his face. He holds a water bottle.

Tom looks down, realizing his hands are strapped together with heavy-duty INDUSTRIAL ZIP-TIES!

TOM
(to himself)
What...

Tom desperately tries to break free but quickly discovers it's next to impossible. He looks around for something he can use to escape, but sees nothing. He studies Jack and Kevin for a moment quietly, considering his options. He finally decides to speak...

TOM (CONT'D)
Oi!
(a little louder)
What is this?

Neither Kevin nor Jack react...

TOM (CONT'D)
Where you taking me, huh?

Still no reaction...

TOM (CONT'D)
Look, I don't know what your game
is but I-

Tom's taken aback... his voice trails off as Kevin turns, giving us a good look at his FACE...

TOM (CONT'D)
Oh no...
(scared)
Listen mate, I know you think it
was me. But I ain't the one that
done this to you...

Kevin would be fairly handsome if not for the BURN SCARS that cover much of the right side of his face...

TOM (CONT'D)
You got the wrong man...

Kevin stares at him for a moment, before turning back around, the bottle still in hand.

TOM (CONT'D)
I'm telling you...

Tom watches Kevin, then scans the cargo area again, looking for anything he can use. But there is nothing. Nothing but himself, and Kevin... and the bottle.

TOM (CONT'D)
(desperate)
I had nothing to do with what happened to you, or your mu-

JACK
(angry)
Enough! Shut your mouth.

Jack eyes Tom from the rearview mirror, trying to read him.

TOM
Please. I need you to listen...

Neither Kevin nor Jack reply. Tom considers staying quiet, but can't help himself...

TOM (CONT'D)
For fuck's sake, you got the wrong man mate-

JACK
(turns back)
I said shut your bloody mouth! Or I'll shut it for you!

Jack turns back around but continues to eye Tom in the rearview mirror. Tom considers his options and decides to stay quiet. They continue driving in silence for a long while, nothing but the ambient noise of the van.

KEVIN
(London accent)
How much further?

JACK
Not long now, we're close.

Kevin turns to face Tom in the back, with a cold, almost emotionless look, as he twists the cap off of the bottle...

TOM
(eyes the bottle)
Where are you taking me?

Kevin approaches Tom slowly, and gestures for him to take the bottle...

TOM (CONT'D)
(whimpers)
What's that?

KEVIN
Drink it.

Tom shakes his head. Kevin reaches behind his back with the other hand, and pulls out a 9MM PISTOL...

TOM
Come on mate...
(beat)
I told you, it wasn't m-

Kevin points the gun at Tom's head...

KEVIN
I said drink.

Kevin gestures for Tom to take it. In the front, Jack looks through the rearview with concern.

JACK
(to Kevin)
What are you doing Kev? Let's stick
to the plan, yeah?

Kevin keeps his eyes and sights trained on Tom...

KEVIN
I'm changing the plan.

Kevin cocks back the hammer of his gun, his eyes filling with a strange intensity...

KEVIN (CONT'D)
(to Tom)
Now drink.

Tom, almost paralyzed with fear, begins to crack, on the verge of tears...

TOM
(whimpers)
I can't... please...

KEVIN
I said drink you fucking coward!

Tom cracks and begins to cry hysterically...

TOM
Please... I... I... can't...

KEVIN
What's the matter? You ain't
thirsty then?
(moves in a blur)
Fine. Have it your way...

Kevin suddenly SPLASHES Tom in the face with the contents of
the bottle! Immediately, Tom begins to SCREAM in pain!

TOM
Ohh fuck!!! Fuck!!
(squirms wildly)
Shit!! Oh no... no...

Until he realizes...

TOM (CONT'D)
It's...
(relieved)
It's water...
(calms)
It's only water...

KEVIN
What'd you think? That I'm a
monster like you?

This seems to hit a chord with Tom, as he looks down...

KEVIN (CONT'D)
No, you're the only monster here...

Tom looks up slowly, his lip quivering as he tries to put
together words.

TOM
No... you got it all wrong. I ain't
done nothing... I ain't the one
that hurt you mate. I swear!

KEVIN
Lair! I'd never forget your face...
(hate in his eyes)
Mate.

TOM
I... I di-

KEVIN
(screams)
You stole everything from us!

TOM
I'm sorry... I-

KEVIN
(calms)
Our mother...

Tom looks down in fear...

KEVIN (CONT'D)
She's reminded of what you've done
every time she leaves the flat...
every time she looks in the mirror!

Kevin fights back his emotions as Tom listens, unsure of how to respond...

KEVIN (CONT'D)
You deserve to die for what you
done...

Tom shakes his head, he doesn't want to hear this...

KEVIN (CONT'D)
And you bloody well know it!

Tom looks up at Kevin, teary eyed...

TOM
No... please, liste-

KEVIN
(screams)
IT WAS YOU!!!
(calms a bit)
Don't try to deny it...
(even calmer)
The only question is why. Why would
you do that to someone? You have
any idea how much time I've spent,
trying to make sense of that?
(angry)
I just couldn't believe, that
someone would throw acid in our
faces just to steal...
(furious)
A FUCKING HANDBAG?!!

Kevin backhands Tom across the face...

KEVIN (CONT'D)
 You ruined our lives for a few
 quid, and a bloody mobile!! You
 fucking realize that?!!

Kevin kicks Tom in the ribs, causing him to double over in pain...

TOM
 (groans)
 I... I-

KEVIN
 (barely keeps it together)
 You cost us... everything!

He gets in Tom's face... Tom fights the urge to look away and tries to look Kevin in the eye.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
 Go ahead, get a good look.
 (beat)
 What's the matter?

Tom seems overcome with a mixture of fear and guilt...

KEVIN (CONT'D)
 Don't appreciate your handiwork?

Kevin looks over to Jack.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
 See the thing about our family is
 that we're a patient lot. When the
 courts set you free, they gave us
 no choice. We knew what we had to
 do...

Tom slowly shakes his head, and musters the courage to speak...

TOM
 I'm sorry... for what happened to
 you. I really am. But you got to
 believe me. I didn't do this to
 you. I couldn't do this to
 anybody... I ain't a monster, and
 you ain't one neither. You're a
 victim, at no fault of yo-

Kevin suddenly lunges forward and shoves the gun in Tom's face!

KEVIN
Liar! I saw your face!

Tom cowers, eyes wide, as Kevin's finger tightens on the trigger... Jack watches through the rearview...

JACK
Kev! Please! Not in here! Stick to
the plan...

After a moment, Kevin takes his finger off the trigger, and de-cocks the gun's hammer. He turns his back to Tom, and stares ahead.

Jack checks out Tom in the rearview...

JACK (CONT'D)
(to Tom)
And you, you sniveling piece of
shite, you best keep your mouth
shut, if you know what's good for
you...

Tom sits in silence, defeated, as they drive for a long while, until Jack turns off the road onto a dirt path...

JACK (CONT'D)
This is it. We're here.

The van comes to a stop as Jack turns it off and gets out. He walks around the van, and a moment later, the cargo door slides open.

KEVIN
(gestures to Tom)
Get out.

Tom looks outside the door to see what looks like an endless desert... and doesn't move.

TOM
Alright I admit it... I ran with a
gang, but I ain't the one that
burned you. I swear it. You saw the
courts let me go, they knew they
had the wrong man...

Suddenly, Kevin lunges at Tom and grabs him by the hair, forcing him out of the van...

TOM (CONT'D)
No... ple-

EXT. DESERT - CONTINUOUS

Tom hits the dirt hard! Kevin jumps out of the van and keeps his gun trained on him...

From the side of the van, Jack watches in anticipation...

KEVIN
(to Tom)
Get up!

Tom continues to lay on the ground, almost as if he feels safer there...

KEVIN (CONT'D)
I said, get the fuck up!

Kevin quickly grabs Tom by the hair and pulls him up on his feet...

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Not so tough now, are you?
(motions)
Start walking.

Tom, afraid, does as he's told. Kevin walks him away from the van, toward the dried remains of a large tree in the distance...

TOM
(looks back)
Don't do this... please...

Kevin jabs Tom with the gun, pushing him forward. Jack follows, a few steps behind.

KEVIN
(fierce)
Why? You know what you did to me.

TOM
But I'm telling you, it wasn-

Kevin smacks Tom in the back of the head, causing him to stumble and almost fall... Jack watches anxiously.

KEVIN
(yells)
Shut your lying mouth!
(calms)
Keep walking...

Tom reluctantly continues toward the tree...

KEVIN (CONT'D)
You know what you've done. You
brought this on yourself...

Tom looks down and shakes his head.

TOM
I don't know how else to say it...
(pleads)
I promise you... I had fuck all to
do with what happened to you...

KEVIN
Liar!

Kevin kicks Tom in the back, causing him to fall to his
knees...

KEVIN (CONT'D)
On your sodding feet...

Tom slowly gets up and looks over to Jack, who looks away
uncomfortably.

TOM
(to Jack)
It's not too late. You can let me
go mate, please.
(shakes his head)
I won't say anything. Just let me
loose, and it'd be like the whole
thing never happened. I promise you-

Kevin steps forward and levels the pistol to Tom's head...

KEVIN
Fuck it. Fuck it all...

He cocks back the gun's hammer and presses the barrel against
Tom's forehead...

TOM
(panics desperately)
No, no, no... please! Don't! I'm
sorry...
(starts to cry)
Please, don't kill me...

Jack steps forward.

JACK
Come on Kev, we've taken this far
enough...

Kevin looks over to Jack.

KEVIN

I'm sorry for dragging you into this mess Jackie... but you know why we came here.

JACK

I know why you came here...

(beat)

I came because my baby brother needed some things sorted out... I came here, so that you could get this vile venom out of your system.

(points)

Look at him. He ain't worth it. Ain't worth the trouble. You taught him a lesson... now, let's just go home...

KEVIN

I'm sorry, but it's no use brother. You're not talking me out of this one...

(beat)

Maybe you forgot what we're here for, but it's not for the conversation... or some kind of fucking therapy...

(beat)

You know what he's done!

Kevin kicks Tom in the gut, causing him to double over and cough...

KEVIN (CONT'D)

He knows what he's done!

(to Tom)

Don't you?!

Kevin's hand trembles as he presses the gun's barrel against Tom's forehead...

KEVIN (CONT'D)

(screams)

Don't you?!!

Tom finally cracks...

TOM

(yells)

I'm sorry! I was stupid! Didn't know any better! Didn't think about what I wa-

Jack takes a step back upon hearing this, as Kevin grabs Tom by the throat with his free hand...

KEVIN

Why? Why did you do this to us? We never did a thing to you! We didn't even know you! Why?! Why did you do this to us?!

(enraged)

To me? To my mother!!

Tom looks up with tears in his eyes at Kevin...

TOM

I... I was a fool, trying to be something I wasn't...

KEVIN

(lunges angrily)

Not good enough! You threw acid in our faces! We were just walking down the street, and you just came up to us, and ruined our fucking lives!! Did you think we were rich? Did we look like the posh pair? Ripe for robbery?

Tom shakes his head in shame.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Why?

(screams)

Why did you do that to us?! What the fuck is wrong with you?!

Kevin is at the apex of his rage, while Tom cries, in the deepest depths of his fear...

TOM

(trembles)

I... I don't know...

(crying)

I don't know....

Kevin's hand continues to shake nervously as he stares down the gun sights at Tom. After a moment...

JACK

(softly)

Kevin.

Jack inches forward and slowly places his hand on Kevin's shoulder.

JACK (CONT'D)
You've made him understand. I know
you're angry, but you're not a
killer, as much as he's not a man.
(beat)
Don't waste your life on him.

Kevin's eyes remain fixed on Tom...

KEVIN
He deserves to die!

JACK
The hell he put you and mum
through... no one would blame you.
But this isn't you Kev... don't let
this animal rob you of your
innocence too.

KEVIN
I'm doing this for mum...

JACK
Then don't. She would never want
you to do this, and you know it.

The tension in the air is palpable, as Kevin considers this
for a long moment...

KEVIN
(turns to Jack)
You should go back to the van.

Jack realizes what Kevin is telling him...

JACK
(softly)
We've taken this far enough Kev.
Come on, let's just go home...

Kevin stares at Jack as he ponders what to do, and calms a
bit.

Then, suddenly...

KEVIN
Fuck it.

Kevin turns back to Tom, and FIRES a single SHOT!

JACK
(shocked)
No!

Kevin watches Tom's limp body collapse onto the dirt, leaving only the hint of a pink mist hanging in the air...

He turns to Jack slowly, tears in his eyes...

KEVIN
(emotional)
I'm sorry Jackie. I couldn't let
him go...

Kevin turns and walks back to the van, leaving Jack there, still in disbelief. Nothing but the faint rustling of the WIND can be heard...

JACK
(to himself)
What have you done, Kev?

FADE OUT.

JACK (V.O.)
What have you done?