

INSPIRATION

by

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A SILENT FILM.

FADE IN:

INT. QUAIN AND QUIRKY COFFEE SHOP - DAY

A flutter of white.

It's a napkin, dabbing at spilled coffee.

The hand holding the napkin belongs to a WAITRESS (young, fresh, cheery).

At the next table, a WRITER (30's worn down by life) sits by the window and gazes out at PASSERS BY who hurry past, clutching coats and scarves around them. The wind blows dry leaves across the sidewalk.

On the table before him are a pen, two empty paper cups of coffee and a notebook, which is blank, of course.

LATER...

Six paper cups, two crossed-out paragraphs.

LATER...

Ten paper cups, three torn pages, doodling.

Writer stands up, tosses his pen on the table, and shuffles across the shop toward the men's room.

INT. MEN'S RESTROOM - DAY

Writer slumps into the room, enters a stall.

Under the stall door, his feet tap idly.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Writer drags himself back to the table, and finds a Waitress clearing away his empty cups and trash.

She smiles at him. It takes a second for him to process this spark of human kindness. But once he does, he smiles back.

He sits. Thinks.

Then snatches up his pen and writes.

And writes and writes and writes. The words flow effortlessly, page after page.

The pages fly into the air transitioning to...

A white window shade being pulled shut.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

The cafe's SURLY OWNER shakes his head at Writer. The lights are off, the place is closed, get the hint already.

Reluctantly, Writer leaves, clutching his notebook to his chest.

MONTAGE

Various mornings.

Writer enters coffee shop, notebook in hand.

Sets the notebook on his favorite table, just so.

Heads for the men's room.

Exits, beaming and brimming with ideas.

Smiles at Waitress.

Writes in his notebook.

Repeat three times.

The fourth time, Writer follows his routine, but writes.

THE END.

END MONTAGE

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Writer sits at a table across from an IMPORTANT AGENT who wears an important suit and an important expression.

Between them, THE MANUSCRIPT lies on the table.

Agent nods at the manuscript, and smiles at Writer.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Writer sits at his usual table and gazes out the window. He watches passers by stroll past, dressed in sandals and sundresses.

Waitress brings him a cup of coffee. He smiles at her, holds up his book.

She doesn't think the jacket photo does him justice. He blushes.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

Rain beats against the window.

Waitress sets two cups of coffee on the table.

Writer and Agent sit on either side of a contract whose key word is...

SEQUEL.

Writer signs with gusto. He's got this.

EXT. CAFE - DAY

A sign on the door says:

CLOSED FOR REMODELING

Writer stares at the sign in disbelief. He grabs the door handle, rattles it.

He moves to the window, presses his face against the glass.

The shop is dark, chairs stacked on top of tables.

Writer frowns, his face still smushed against the glass. He's not giving up this easily.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

Writer looks up and down the deserted alleyway to confirm that it is, indeed, deserted.

He walks up to the cafe's battered rear door and tries the handle. Locked, of course.

He scans the pile of garbage near the door and spots a crowbar, snatches it up and inserts it in the doorjamb.

He pulls. Nothing happens. Pushes, and nothing happens.

Clearly the writer's life has not prepared him for this task.

He looks up, as if beseeching the heavens, and spots a window.

EXT. ALLEY - LATER

Writer perches atop a precarious looking stack of crates and boxes.

He pushes at the transom window once, twice, and finally, gets it open.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

A notebook appears in the window then falls, its covers acting like a pair of wings to gently guide it to the ground.

Next comes Writer's head and shoulders. Then an arm, then one leg hoisted over the windowsill.

Then he falls --

landing HARD on the tile floor.

Writer lies there, helpless as an overturned turtle, before rolling over and gingerly feeling for broken bones.

He stands up, then spots a pedestrian outside the window and ducks down again.

On his knees, he scoots to his usual table.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - MOMENTS LATER

Writer pops up, snatches the chair from his table, and ducks down again.

He places the notebook on the table, just so.

Heads for the men's room.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - DAY

Writer enters the men's room and takes his usual stall.

Then...

A GIANT WRECKING BALL SMASHES THROUGH THE WALL

IN. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

A CONSTRUCTION WORKER steps through the rubble of the destroyed rest room and sees a pair of trembling legs under the dented bathroom stall.

He opens the stall door as if he were opening a coffin lid.

Writer looks up at the Construction Worker with a dazed expression.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING

Writer, swathed in casts and bandages but for his right arm, looks glumly out the window.

A nurse's aide backs into the room, pulling a cart full of breakfast trays.

She turns to Writer, a glass of juice in hand.

It's Waitress.

She nearly drops her glass of juice in surprise.

Eyes meet, smiles exchanged.

Realization dawns on Writer. He points to a pen dangling from a chain on the breakfast cart.

Waitress tugs at it, hands it over.

When Writer takes the pen, their hands touch. They smile.

*She was his muse all along.*

He starts to write on one of his casts. And writes and writes and writes.

Waitress pulls at the curtain around his bed to give him privacy.

A flutter of white.

FADE OUT