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One and Two

By Andrew Droz Palermo

Breakfast is on the table.
We're burning daylight.
Come on. Let's go.
- Zac.
- I'm coming.
We gotta get this done by nightfall.
Go on now.
Mom, look.
Look who got out.
- Come here.
- I'm gonna go around this side.
Come on.
I got you girl. I got you.
Yes.
Okay, watch this.
Is she asleep?
- How'd you do that?
- It's a secret. I can't tell you.
Come on. Please tell me.
Okay.
The first step...
is catch!
- You finish up this last bit.
- Yes, sir.
Zac?
Zac?
Where do you think they're going?
Who knows.
I bet I could make it up there.
No way. It's dark and too far away.
You dare me? I bet I could.
Oh, yeah? Even if you did, then what?
I don't know.
Anything.
Meet other people.
Maybe people like you and me.
Would you go with me?
Seems like everything I need
is already right here.
Why would I wanna go someplace else?
Oh, God.
Breathe.
Elizabeth, breathe.
Come on.

I know you two were out last night.
And I know you were out there doing
what we all decided a long time ago
would be best left behind.

Now you've gone and drudged up
everything that comes along with it.
So you can trust me when I tell you,
I catch you two doing that again...
there's gonna be a price to pay.
You understand me?

- Yes.

- Yes, sir.

Zac. I'll need your help
tending the horses this morning.
Eva, you let your mother sleep.
Come on out when you're done in here.

This thing we have...

we never asked for it...

but it's part of me.

It always has been.

But he doesn't see it that way.

What is this place?

Why are we here and not out there?

It's almost like a dream.

I want out...

but the wall...

Dad says it's to keep other people out.

But I don't believe him anymore.

We're the only ones here.

I think it's just meant to keep us in.

Let's pray.

- Dad? Dad?

- Mom? Mom?

Zac, help. Grab her...

Eva, pull the chair.

That's it. Hold her legs.

Don't let her thrash about.

Easy. Easy.

That's it. That's it.

Nice and deep.

All the way.

You got it.

You got it. That's it.

That's it.

That's it.
Alright. Alright.
You're in our home.
You had a fit, okay?
It wasn't a big one.
Time for bed.
- Is she okay?
- She'll be fine.
Right now, she's gettin' ready for bed.
Which is where you two should be. Come on.
I had hoped we'd made it past all that.
So did I.
It was right before you were born.
One of those summers where...
cicadas were screaming all day long.
Tons of 'em everywhere.
I used to like to catch 'em,
keep 'em in jars.
One day, I had a whole jar full.
I went inside the kitchen
to show Mom and...
she was just layin' there...
shaking like that.
I dropped the jar,
cicadas were flying everywhere.
I kneeled down to help her...
I put my hand on her belly...
and everything just stood still.
I could hear her heart
pounding in my head.
Everything stopped.
And just like that, boom,
everything went black.
And I woke up outside in the front yard.
- You waitin' to see if I have another?
- No. Sorry.
It's alright. You're right to worry.
I don't know when it's coming either.
But you know none of this is your fault.
Right?
Hey.
Why don't you go out
and run around, go for a swim?
I can handle dinner, okay?

- Really?
- Yes, really.
- Are you sure?
- Eva, go.

Get!

I don't understand.

What service is she to you in this state?

What do I have to do to stop this?

There was a time when I thought
they might be...

gifted by you in some way
with some divine purpose.

But I'm scared.

They together might be
somethin' against your desire...
somethin' worse.

Come on, keep goin'. Now!

And I am asking for your help.

I'm asking for clarity.

Zac, you go ahead, wait in your room.

What were you two doin' out there?

We were just playing.

How did you get out?

Well, you're done with this.

Turn around. Face the wall.

- Why?

- Move. Let's go. Come on.

- Dad...

- Come on.

Dad.

You hold still.

Don't you dare move.

Stand up!

I put my trust in you...

and you let me down.

Get up against the wall. Get!

I'm sorry, I know...

Be still now.

I'm gonna talk to Eva, we're not gonna...

Goddamn you.

Dad, I'm sorry. Dad!

Stupid. Stupid. Stupid! Stupid!

Eva, we're not doing this anymore!

Eva?

Zac?

Are you okay?

- I hate him.

- I know.

- I hate him so much.

- I know. He's just scared.

I have to go help Eva.

- This won't happen again.

- I'm so sorry.

No, you didn't do anything wrong.

I'm sorry.

What is wrong with you?

What are you trying to teach them?

Answer me.

They're children, Daniel.

They're our children.

They're more than that.

Yes, they are. But that doesn't mean
you can treat them like that.

- No one deserves this.

- What am I supposed to do?

They don't listen. And it's starting
to take its toll on all of us.

I know you're scared.

I'm scared too. I'm horrified.

- I might be leaving you all sooner than...

- Don't you talk like that. Please!

It's the truth! And it has absolutely
nothing to do with them!

I will let them down

when I am good and ready.

I already did.

Elizabeth.

Elizabeth!

Are you okay?

We can't, Eva.

What do you mean?

It's not worth it.

We have to do what he says.

You'll get over it. Come on.

Eva, I'm serious.

Fine.

Come on, get out of here. Let's go.

- Hey.

- Hey.
- I was thinking about goin' swimming.
- That's nice, but I can't.
- Zac, come on.
- What, Eva?
You're just gonna live like this?
Come on.
- I got work to do.
- Seriously? Zac!
I'm done with this.
I'm not doing that again.
You alright?
Did you fall out of your nest?
I really believed we could make something.
I mean... could make a life.
Live the way we wanna live. Raise...
kids, the way we wanna raise kids.
This is everything I ever feared.
All those stories were true.
It's hard.
Your children aren't trying
to make loving them difficult.
All they ever wanted was to be loved.
They're children.
Zac?
Zac?
Alright, I'm right here. Hey.
Okay.
I need you to breathe for me.
Breathe for me. Come on, now.
Come on, now. You breathe for me. Come on.
Come on, now. Don't... Elizabeth.
Come on. Breathe.
Elizabeth.
You got this.
You can do that. Come on.
What's going on?
Your mother...
What happened?
Where's your sister at?
I don't know. She's not in her room?
Zac, I need you to go ahead
and get in the closet.
- Why?

- I can't do this right now.
You go on. We can talk about it later.
Hey, Dad.
Hey, Dad! What's goin' on?
You go ahead and close
the door behind you.
Go on.
What is it?
She's gone.
- Stop.
- I wanna be with her.
I should've done this a long time ago.
Don't make this any harder.
Get away from that window.
Come on.
Eva! Eva!
Eva! Eva!
What's going on? Let me out!
What do you want from me?
What do you want?
I fear for your soul, Eva.
Zac! Zac!
Let go or your fingers are coming with it.
Now you gotta be thirsty,
so do not spill this.
Come on.
Good boy.
Oh, it's gonna be different now, Zac.
It's gonna be better.
You're gonna be okay, sweetie.
Everything's gonna be okay.
I'm sorry.
There you are.
Are you alright?
It's okay. I'm not gonna hurt you.
Let's see if we can get you
back to your room.
Don't touch me.
It's okay. John... I need help here.
I hope that by now what you're feeling
is something different than anger.
You can go ahead and...
clean yourself up and come on out...
whenever you're ready.

Where is Eva?
She's gone, Zac.
Where is she?
I took care of her.
They're both at peace.
- What do you mean?
- You know what I mean.
You didn't.
Go see for yourself.
You're awake.
Are you alright?
We were worried about you.
I'm Jamie.
That's... Frank and Paul over there.
They're good guys. I promise.
You feeling better?
Listen, I... saw that thing on your wrist.
It's okay.
I'm not trying to pry.
We didn't call nobody.
You looked like you were gonna be alright.
We figured you had your reasons.
So I decided to wait and see
if you wanted help or not.
I'm okay.
Alright.
I getcha. I've been there.
We don't have to call nobody
unless you want to.
You just let me know.
Thanks. I appreciate your help.
You're welcome.
Come on over and sit with us.
You don't have to run off.
When you finally start dreamin'
And everyone can tell
I close your eyes, let you drift away
I'll make sure you feel better
With the stillness that you know
From a time when you still
had a million days
He's good, isn't he?
Be true to yourself through and through...
You look just like my daughter does

when the TV'd be on.
Starin' there, frozen.
I'd do little dances in front of the set
and she'd just lean her little body over
till she could see.
Keep love in your heart
Until the day you die
- Get up. Get up.
- What?
- What is that?
- It's the cops. Damn it!
- I was just getting comfortable.
- Shit. Again?
- Assholes.
- You think we should book it?
I sure as hell ain't gonna cut
my ass up climbing out of here.
- Unless this one's done somethin'.
- I didn't do anything.
- You sure?
- I promise I did not do anything.
What's goin' on down here, people?
- Y'all are not supposed to be down here.
- Just the four of ya?
Well, yeah. It's just us.
Alright. Step outside. Come on.
What the hell?
Why?
Why would he blame us?
What makes him so afraid?
What is it?
Mom always saw it as a gift.
She never doubted.
But he's scared...
and weak.
I don't know how he can live with himself.
I wanna make him feel what I feel.
Hey, you got a light?
A what?
Figured.
Say, you have a lighter I can bum?
So what's your deal? You just move here?
Run away from home? What?
I don't live with my family anymore.

No shit.

Me and this dingus just got yanked out
of our parent's house again the other day.

How come?

My mom can't stay clean long enough

to have some dumbshit

walk through our house

tell us if it's livable or not.

Which it isn't, but that's not the point.

My dad threw me out.

You got any place to stay?

- No, not really.

- Well, you can hang with me tonight.

Then I can see if you can come

to the girl's home with me.

They feed you at least. Just come.

Alright.

Okay, well, let me begin

by explaining what I'm here for.

All the girls here, Eva, have their...

their own stories as how they got here.

And I would guess that yours

is similar to most of them.

Now Danny tells me, Eva, that...

- It's E-va.

- E-va.

Danny tells me that you

didn't have a place to stay.

So we're happy to provide that

for you for a little while.

You know, this is a safe place.

Everything that you and I talk about

in here it'll stay between you and me.

Okay.

Great. Why don't we...

start with... where you're from.

What about it?

Well, Danny tells me

that she met you around town.

Have you always lived here?

Did you grow up somewhere else?

Somewhere else.

So how'd you end up here?

I ran away from home.

That's a very brave thing, Eva.
New places can be very intimidating
especially on your own.
Why don't we talk a little bit about
the home that you ran away from?
Who did you live there with?
My brother and my father
and... my mother.
Are they still there?
Eva?
Are they all still there?
Yes.
Gets any colder, we're gonna have
to chop up some more wood.
You know, you gonna have
to talk to me eventually.
You can't keep talking
to that horse everyday.
What is that you want me to say?
Anything. Whatever you want,
whatever's on your mind.
Might make things better between us.
In the end... like,
they start, like, spending
more and more time together
but he starts getting weaker and weaker.
So then, he, like, dies...
She's doing a lot of things now.
She likes to dance or play
or she loves singing.
And she's as...
Who the hell does she think she is?
Nobody even likes her.
Well, just 'cause our families' here...
doesn't mean anything.
Okay, girls. Goodbye hug
and let's line up at the door.
Hustle up.
- Come on.
- What the hell?
- Get off of me!
- Danny! Danny!
- Get off of her. Stop it!
- Just ignore her.

What the hell do you know?
Your dad threw you out on your ass.
- I'm tryin' to help.
- I don't need your help.
- I don't need anybody's fuckin' help!
- Enough!
I know you're upset about everything.
I'm upset, too.
Son, I don't think you got
the full picture.
Look, when I was your age...
I struggled to understand this place.
Walk along that wall.
Wonder...
what it all meant.
I plagued my dad with questions.
He told me stories
about your great-grandparents,
their kin and their friends
who claimed this land.
Their community had been...
fractured, had been destroyed by...
unexplained deaths...
disappearances, sometimes it's children.
Tore families apart.
Having theirs, they... they came here
trying to make a fresh start.
And now we are the ones that remain.
Oh, when I was a kid
those stories filled me full of fear.
But as time went on, I grew.
Life was... normal, orderly.
Then your mother and I started
talking about having children.
Those stories came back.
I was scared.
And your mother...
she said they were just stories,
they were just folklore.
And you were born.
And you were a happy, healthy child.
We were so happy.
Few years went by.
And then along came Eva.

And...
things started happening.
Your mother fell ill and...
And we... been struggling ever since.
It amazes me.
And after everything
you've done to this family.
That you can sit in here...
and talk, and talk...
Zac, I'm telling you the truth.
I'm not saying I'm without fault here.
I'm not. But I need you to understand.
Understand how delusional you are?
Not to... sit down. Sit down!
- You want me to understand for you killing Eva!
- Zac, stop!
I need you to calm down. Listen to me.
- I need you to understand something.
- I will never forgive you for killin' Eva.
I need you to understand who I think
you are and what you're capable of.
- Let go of me.
- Zac, Zac, what are you doing?
Zac, no! What are you doing?
I'm sorry, son.
I always wondered
what it would be like without him.
Part of me thought it would feel
kinda good, you know?
I keep thinking I'm gonna see you wave.
When I wake up...
when I turn around...
You and Mom.
Even Dad, if you believe that.
But I know that isn't gonna happen.
I'm just gonna have to...
learn to live with that.
Zac!
Eva?
Goodbye, Mom.
Thank you.
Hey.
I have an idea.
I'm the king of my own land

Facing tempests of dust
I'll fight until the end
Creatures of my dreams raise up
And dance with me
Now and forever
I'm your king