

THE INTERVENIONIST

Written by

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INT. CAR - NIGHT

On the outer desert lands of Las Vegas, a 1986 silver Crystal New Yorker is moving at a casual speed along a dusty road. The air is thick and dry after a typical day in the City of Sin. Inside sit 2 people at vastly different places in their lives. Driving is PETER (50's). He is relaxed and chewing gum. Sitting in the back is BETH (early 20's). She is fidgety and looks uncomfortable. There is little to no relationship on display. Classic oldies that has been playing on the radio comes to an abrupt stop as Peter flips the cassette over. A long period of time lapses before someone speaks.

BETH

Ive heard about those. You flip it like a pancake right?

PETER

Yeah. It's like a test to see if you are really paying attention.

BETH

Right, like Netflix with 'are you still watching?'

PETER clearly is not a subscription guy.

BETH (CONT'D)

And just so I'm not going crazy, this is a recording of a radio station?

PETER

Yep.

BETH

So this is not the first time you've listened to it?

PETER

You would be correct.

BETH

So it's already happened?

PETER

(little frustrated)
My antenna broke off. I like listening to the radio.

BETH

(confused)
Do you also play last week's lottery numbers?

PETER

(sigh)

No.

Pause as BETH just can't let it go.

BETH

But how the fuck does that work?
You are scrolling the local radio
listensings and think 'that looks
like great programming' I will make
a point to listen to that after the
fact. Or are you like, half way
through listening and think 'fuck,
this may never happen again, I need
to preservce this for future
generations'

PETER

You talk a lot when you feel
nervous?

BETH goes to say something quick but realizes she might be
confirming his suspicions. Her tone changes to a more casual
car rider.

BETH

So... what time do you get off?

They both smile.

PETER

(wry)

You're my first AND last one for
the evening.

Longer pause.

BETH

So is there some sort of scenic
tour built into this package or
does that jack up the bill? For the
'cheddar' this whole thing is going
to cost my family, maybe you want
to throw out some 'local trivia'
you know?! Elvis pissed on that
rock over there, Sinatra buried a
body over there...

She suddenly remembers something herself.

oh, oh...

(MORE)

BETH (CONT'D)

you hear the one about the workers who died constructing the Hoover Dam?

PETER

I haven't.

BETH

Some fucked up shit man. They were buried in the concrete, and since it was being poured so quickly they couldn't be removed, and thus were entombed into the dam.

PETER

That cant be true.

BETH

Vegas is at it's ugliest when you turn the lights on.

PETER

You lived here your entire life?

BETH

What's conceived in Vegas, stays in Vegas.

She looks out the window as the night sky reflects on her self abused face.

BETH (CONT'D)

I've never know anything different.

BETH's phone vibrates with a text message. The name on the phone says AMBER.

AMBER - Where r u?!?! Shit is getin craz!

TEXT REPLY - Things have changed.

AMBER - u know he ain't goin to b happy about dis?!?

As she is replying her phone dies.

BETH (CONT'D)

FUCK! MOTHER FUCKING FUCK! You have a charger in here? Actually, here's a more blanket question, you have anything made past 1996 in here?

PETER

Ironically the blanket might be early 2000's.

BETH pinches an old blanket next to her and pulls a face.

BETH
Jesus! For real! Question, if the
FEDS were to swab this, how many
cold cases would be solved?

PETER
New doesn't mean quality.

The car hits a pot hole in the road as BETH bangs her head on
the upholstery.

BETH
(grimacing)
No, but it does mean suspension
Asshole. I'd imagine my charger is
in the trunk but who knows what the
fuck my Mom packed. She still
thinks of me as a kid so it
wouldn't shock me if my One
Direction Jam Jams are in there.
You got one or not?

PETER
Jam Jams?

BETH
Charger.

PETER
Na, sorry. You weren't the only one
who found out at the last minute
this was happening.

BETH throws her phone to the side in a petulant nature. You
can tell she is trying her best to control whatever is going
on inside of her.

BETH
(frustrated)
Fuck! I just feel like I didn't
have time to get my shit together
you know. I mean... I get why it
has to be this way... I do,
really... but -- you not having a
charger is really going to impact
your star rating.

BETH smirks. PETER smiles wider.

PETER
I'm sure I'll survive.

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Heavy cargo boxes are being crowbarred open to reveal high grade military weapons. Men dressed in all black begin loading up 3 SUV's with an arsenal that would make the Middle East blush. One of the men removes a phone and texts. "TEAM 1 on the move".

CUT BACK:

INT. CAR - NIGHT

The drive continues with BETH becoming more and more antsy.

BETH
You know you can talk right?!
Jesus... an antidote, a joke,
fable, limerick, soliloquy... you
can spin me a yarn or regale me a
tale... how about a poem, doesn't
need to be Emerson or Whitman,
fuck, I will happily take a verse
of 'Diarrhea '... give me something
to keep my mind off...

PETER
(interrupting her)
...your Mom said you were always
the smartest one in the family.

BETH acknowledges what he said.

BETH
Yeah... well-- that doesn't take
much.

PETER
Showed me pictures of you at school
functions, normally clutching some
scholastic achievement while
dripped in a colorful sash.

BETH
Sorry to break it to you but I
believe you've passed the age where
you can legally say the word
'dripped' around a female my age.

PETER looks confused.

BETH (CONT'D)

And sorry to shatter whatever memories my darling parents are clinging on to but the bottom line is book smarts doesn't always equate to street smarts does it.

(beat)

I've always found mathematical problems easier to deal with than life problems. I assure you, you don't want me to 'show you my work' for the past few years.

PETER

I've seen your file.

BETH looks a little ashamed. The lingering pauses are starting to get under BETH's skin.

BETH

Looks, if it helps you can start of by saying 'you're life has affected my life in the following ways'. Seems to be the popular launchpad for peoples opinions this evening.

PETER

I don't need to do that. I don't know you. I only met you an hour ago but I think in 90 days there might be someone I would like to get to know better.

BETH

Cute! Bear with me while I turn on my BS-a-meter.

BETH points her dead phone at Peter and makes beeping sounds.

BETH (CONT'D)

Just as I thought, off the chart.

Both laugh out loud before the mood settles.

BETH (CONT'D)

You see that a lot? People being able to turn the page, book ear a chapter? Move on?

PETER

I wouldn't do what I do if the results proved otherwise.

BETH

But what if the story they were being saved from was more complicated? Maybe the hole is wider and deeper than any length of help can be extended! Maybe, instead of pulling them out, someone would rather leave them there, fill it in and wait for a Five Below to build over top?!

PETER

Whatever demons you are carrying, you are headed to the right place to begin the 'exorcism'. Everything is going to be OK Beth.

BETH

(doing an Regan impression)
Stick your cock up her ass, you motherfucking worthless cocksucker.

PETER is again confused. BETH looks out of window.

BETH (CONT'D)

(under her breath)
This is going to be a loooooong drive.

CUT TO:

INT. STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

As the last patron leaves the club, the door is locked with several deadbolts. Multiple strippers swing into action and start dismantling parts of the stage, removing weapons and ammunition by the case load. One of them pulls out a phone and texts 'Team 2 is locked' They exit out the back of the building and screech off in a pink limousine.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - NIGHT

PETER is thinking hard as BETH is staring straight through the back of his head.

PETER

(unsure)
The desert?

BETH

"Bzzzz"

BETH laughs and shakes her head.

BETH (CONT'D)

Give up old man, you keep concentrating this hard motor oil will leak from your ear canal. You want me to say it again? I can say it slowly if your presbycusis has already started?

PETER

One last time--and normal speed is fine young buck.

BETH

Ok... I have cities, but no houses. I have mountains, but no trees. I have water, but no fish. What am I?

PETER continues to mentally work his way through the riddle.

BETH (CONT'D)

Seriously dude, I can literally hear the brain kernels popping from the confused heat you are generating.

PETER

(smiling)

I'll get it, I'll get it!

A beat happens before BETH becomes more earnest about everything that is going.

BETH

You said back at the hotel that you've been clean for 10 years, no 'emotional' pot holes throw you off course... even for a little bit?

PETER seems reserved to speak.

BETH (CONT'D)

Dude, you've just seen 'heart wrenching snot tears' from pretty much my entire family-- including my aunt Kirsty and fuck that bitch because she has her own problems to work through before she starts tearing out pages of my dear diary.

PETER
My daughter died 3 years ago.

Beat.

BETH
I'm sorry to hear that. Was it cancer or some shit? Sorry! I just always think people die of cancer. When people are like 'hey you remember Steve?' I just can't help myself by saying 'dead' instantly, it just comes out! And then I'm like 'got to be cancer' I swear like 10% of the people I know online are dead with at least 70% of them dead from cancer... so-- I can't do THAT math but you get my point.

PETER doesn't get her point. There is a slight delay to allow the conversation to resume.

PETER
I was deployed deep in Helmand Province in Afghanistan to help protect local informants. Be unseen but cast enough of a shadow to make sure the intel continues to syphon through. I was dead air with my family for nearly a year and when you are a 17 year old girl, those months are some of the important ones.

PETER's phone is mounted on the dashboard. He clicks on it and swipes through several images until he lands on a picture of him and his daughter.

PETER (CONT'D)
This was taken just before...

BETH leans in closer to the phone, her brow furrows as her eyes squint at the face of his daughter, she seems very familiar.

BETH
(apprehensively)
How did she die?

PETER

They found her parked just off
Valley of Fire with 12 foot
gardening hose taped to the
exhaust.

BETH slowly pushes back in her seat and takes a couple of
deep breaths. She looks back out the window.

PETER (CONT'D)

Autopsy showed enough
Benzodiazepine you could have
removed it with a paint scrapper.

Her eyes are racked with a new emotion, which makes her
frantically search for the next words.

BETH

(apprehensively)
Im really sorry that happened-- to
her!

PETER

Thanks. Just trying to out number
the steps going forward to the ones
going back.

CUT TO:

3 Different locations are going through the same ritual of
preparing for some sort of ambush. Inter cutting between all
3, they all end with text messages stating they are ready and
on the move.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - NIGHT

PETER

Now who is the one being quiet? If
you get cold or sleepy there is
always that blanket back there.

BETH

(distracted)
Thanks, I've certainly slept on
worse.

She picks it up and smells it.

BETH (CONT'D)

Maybe not.

PETERS's phone flips from the image of his daughter to a withheld number calling in.

PETER

Ah, his must be the lead councilor checking in with us, making sure we will make it tonight.

PETER answers the call.

PETER (CONT'D)

This is Peter.

Radio silence.

PETER (CONT'D)

Hello? This is Peter.

VOICE

I'm sure it is.

Instantly BETH jets back from looking out her window to staring directly at the phone. Her eyes are as wide as saucers as her throat takes a petrified gulp.

PETER

This Hand in Hand treatment centre? Sorry, I meant to phone ahead and give an ETA but the intervention took a little longer than usual, so we will be cutting into some late night hours.

There is a long pause while PETER awaits a reply. Long deep sighs start to echo through the phone speaker. BETH looks terror-stricken.

PETER (CONT'D)

Hey? You still there?

VOICE

Oh it's where YOU are that is the more pressing matter right now. Beth. ooooooh Beth. I'm sure you can hear me Beth. As I'm also sure you knew it was just a case of when, and not if, you would be hearing from me-- you are probably just shocked how early it has happened.

BETH remains silent unable to speak.

PETER

I'm sorry, who is this?

VOICE

To you, no one... and I would urge you to keep it that way. But if we are throwing around apologies then let me begin. I'm sorry to tell you there has been a misunderstanding. You see, unfortunately you are in possession of something that belongs to be. Something that is an important part of what I do and thus, essential to things not changing. I don't like change Mr. Rowe, especially change that I am not in control of.

PETER turns and looks and looks at BETH, she is as white as sheet.

PETER

How did you get this number?

VOICE

It's funny, information used to cost a lot back in the day, line the right pockets for the right data. But with changing times comes changing methods and with a few clicks on the right sites, you can dig a rabbit hole as deep as you like. But why am I telling you about 'collecting intel' Mr. Rowe... sorry... Captain Rowe. 3 tour veteran, purple heart for bravery and a Congressional Medal of Honor. Thank you for your service. And now you work as an Interventionist making a difference in peoples lives?

A round of applause echos around the car from the phone.

VOICE (CONT'D)

You really are the good guy. And like every story with good guys, there tends to be a bad guy so I'm asking nicely... don't make me the bad guy. So, lets make this easy shall we. I'll text you with an address. There, you will find a car waiting.

(MORE)

VOICE (CONT'D)

You drop off my property and in exchange you will receive a large bag of money. I'm not going to go into detail about the amount but the effort on my employees face when handing to you will give you a fair idea of the ticket price.

BETH whispers in PETER's ear.

BETH

(pleading)

Please, you don't know who you are dealing...

PETER

(interrupting her)

...I didn't catch your name

VOICE

That really isn't important right now, you understanding everything I've just said is.

PETER takes a beat. This is not the first time he has dealt with someone like this but this voice, THIS voice is leaving an impression that is unlike past situations.

PETER

When I was a kid my dad collected baseball cards, you collect anything?

VOICE

I've built up a lot patience over the years that is now unfortunately running low.

PETER

Well, my Pops had a 1952 Mickey Mantle rookie card, near mint, signed by the great man himself. He idolized him, sometimes I think he took more pleasure in rolling off his baseball stats than anything I ever did with my life. Anyway, for years I tried to get him to have the autograph authenticated and my pops would always refuse. Said it didn't matter, just the fact he believed that he did was enough to never allow evidence, facts... or the truth to change his mind.

(MORE)

PETER (CONT'D)

Anyway, after he passed I got the card appraised and... Mantle never touched it.

PETER waits a beat to see if the voice will say anything.

PETER (CONT'D)

Shocking right?!? So, from that moment, I decided to not listen to what makes people feel good about themselves, just concern myself with the truth. However you presenting yourself doesn't mean I've got to believe shit. Right now, you're just a no-named asshole who knows how to dig around. So until you want to give me reason to be worried, be concerned or just flat out give 2 monkey shits... I'm going to do whats right for this girl and hope you do the same.

The voice sighs with a deep regret.

VOICE

I had a feeling this situation wasn't going to work out well. Normally the girls I have working for me are easily disposable but in Beth's case (tut) Beth... you have taken something from me that I'm going to need back.

BETH looks down fully aware of what the mans voice is alluding to.

VOICE (CONT'D)

Oh and yes, I can 'dig around' so here is one for you. Did you know that Mickey Mantle spent half of his career not hitting the ball. During his career he struck out over 1700 times. People don't talk about that, they allow his reputation to proceed him, as I have chosen to do with you Mr. Rowe.

PETER slams on the brakes of the New Yorker as dust fills the air as thick as can be. As it settles down, 5 sets of headlights cut through the residue to reveal several vehicles waiting for their arrival.

Each vehicle is specialized and shows a broad stroke of visual delights that highlight each group, The Special Ops, The Strippers, The Assassins, The Bikers and The Goths

VOICE (CONT'D)

Let's see how many bases you can get around.

BETH and PETER sit still in the car as the assassination gangs stare them down.

PETER

(to Beth)

Buckle in!

PETER removes the gum from his mouth and presses it under the center console into a larger pile of older gum. He revs the engine as Beth clicks in her seatbelt.

VOICE

Play ball.

A close up of PETER's face shows how ready he is as the title impacts the screen: THE INTERVENTIONIST

THE END