

# Weight of Existence

by

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FADE IN:

INT. BLACK CAR - DAWN

TED CLARK, a middle aged man, distraught, sweating and emotional writes frantically on a coffee stained paper bag.

The rear left side passenger door is wide open.

An OLD MAN is slumped over in the passenger seat with his head resting on the window. Condensation fogs the old man's window as his tired body struggles for every breath.

TED (V.O.)

I was a good man once. I remember I used to do good by people. It's clear to me that the simple truth is that I do more harm than good. The weight of my existence can only be measured by misery. There's no hope left in me to be a good man. I've crossed that line a long time ago.

TED pulls out a black 9mm. Handgun.

OUTSIDE TED'S CAR

The fogged up windows of TED'S car is briefly illuminated by a single gunshot.

SUPER: TWO DAYS EARLIER

INT. DIRTY APARTMENT - NIGHT

TED sits on a couch staring at an object beneath him.

ALICE, a TRANSVESTITE whom only a few could guess she was not a real woman, sits next to him staring at the same object.

ALICE glances at TED trying to get a read on him but TED'S a wall.

ALICE

So wha-da-ya think?

RAY RAY'S lifeless eyes stare at TED sitting on the couch next to ALICE.

A stainless steel knife sticks through RAY RAY'S chest soaking his white T-shirt with blood.

TED

I think you're fucked.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALICE starts to sob.

RAY-RAY's dirty sweat pants and blood soaked shirt does not scream out LOW LIFE MOTHER FUCKING PIMP but his jewelry and the tattoo on his arm that reads "LOW LIFE MOTHER FUCKING PIMP" does.

TED (CONT'D)

Stop your crying we don't got time for that shit.

TED gets off the couch and takes out a pair of rubber gloves. He puts them on and then goes to RAY-RAY and starts taking off his rings.

ALICE

Ya robbin' him?

TED

He came home angry, yelling something about you not making money. You costing money everyday you ain't sucking some nigga off. He starts pushing you . . . starts roughing you up . . .

TED puts on the rings he took off of RAY RAY. ALICE listens to TED like a preacher giving a sermon.

TED goes to the couch and grabs ALICE and drags her to RAY-RAY.

TED (CONT'D)

I want you to scratch his face real deep.

ALICE

What? Why?

TED

You were in a fight for your life . . . you need to show it - make them believe it was either him or you cause that's the only way you getting out of this.

Reluctantly, ALICE begins scratching RAY-RAY'S face and then with a flood of emotion she starts beating RAY-RAY'S lifeless body until all her tears run out of her.

TED stands over ALICE as she sobs uncontrollably.

TED now wears the rings he took off of RAY-RAY. TED lifts ALICE off from the floor.

ALICE looks at TED'S hands with RAY-RAY'S rings on them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ALICE

You was the only person that did right by  
me . . .

ALICE smiles for a moment and closes her eyes waiting for the second act of TED's plan.

TED waits a moment and then starts beating ALICE senseless. After nearly a minute of punching ALICE, TED stops.

TED replaces each ring back to RAY RAY's fingers.

TED drags ALICE'S body to the kitchen and hands her the phone.

TED

Stick to the story and you'll be fine.

ALICE grabs for TED'S face but only reaches his tie.

ALICE

(whispers)  
I love you.

TED dials 911 and walks out the door.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

TED walks towards his car when his cell phone rings.

TED

Yeah.

POLICEMAN

Clarke from the 114?

TED

Yeah, go.

POLICEMAN

Well, I got a 10-50 here.

TED

I don't deal with drunks unless they're  
dead or dying.

POLICEMAN

He says he's your father.

EXT. ASTORIA PARK - NIGHT

TED pulls up to an UNMARKED POLICE CAR parked under the HELL'S GATE BRIDGE.

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CONTINUED:

TWO MEN get out of the CAR and talk to TED.

Behind the MEN, TED sees FRANK CLARKE, his father, sitting in the back seat.

Moments later FRANK is released. As the DETECTIVES drive off FRANK gives THEM the finger.

FRANK

So aren't you gonna give your old man a hug?

TED goes in for a hug but FRANK dodges him.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Ah, go fuck yourself.

FRANK walks away slowly into the night.

Reluctantly TED runs after his FATHER and when he reaches him they stop and moments later hug.

INT. BLACK CAR - NIGHT

A tray with two cups of coffee resting on the dashboard steams the windshield.

Parked by the river TED and FRANK sit in awkward silence.

FRANK

So how's Sandra?

TED

Pop we divorced two years ago.

FRANK

Sorry to hear that.

TED

I'm not.

TED and FRANK both laugh hard but FRANK's laugh turns into a rough cough.

TED (CONT'D)

Come on Pop, take some coffee . . .

FRANK takes out a bottle of pills and takes them down with a swig of whiskey.

FRANK

Doctor says I got a weak heart, says these will help but all they do is make me sleepy. I don't got much time left.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANK (CONT'D)

That's okay cause soon I'll be with my wife and my beautiful boy we'll all be happy like we used to be. Not like now, not like you, you're a miserable fuck. I didn't raise you to be like that but I guess you are who you are. I don't mean to shit on you boy but god-damn-it, look at you.

TED takes a cup from the tray and starts drinking.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I remember the day you were born. I drove like a maniac trying to get your mother to the hospital. She was screaming in pain and I was sweating bullets. My son was coming out and I was stuck in traffic. Miriam gave me this look and I was so scared for her. I cut the wheel and drove on the sidewalk, I went down three blocks that way until the traffic let up. I got her there in time and twenty minutes later you were born. Looking into your eyes for the first time I realized something. For the first time I knew a secret about myself. I knew that there was nothing I wouldn't do for that baby. I knew that no matter what, I would protect him with my life. The clarity of it all was so beautiful that I cried for the first time in public and I didn't care who saw my tears. My greatest regret was that I couldn't do it for all my boys. After you there was Bobby but he was special wasn't he, God took him before his first month. Then there was Nicky . . . see you couldn't do nothing about Bobby but Nicky, Nicky you could of protectED. You knew what he was into - didn't you! You knew the people he ran with but you did nothing!

TED

What was I supposed to do, huh? He was a grown man, he made his own choices - no one forced him to be a drug addict!

FRANK

You could have protectED him! You could of saved him but you did nothing. You did nothing!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TED

NO, NOOO! You ain't gonna pin his miserable life on me you sick fuck! Where were you, where were you when he was shooting up, out drunk at some bar screwing your whores while mom was dying of humiliation knowing her husband was a no good, cheating drunk.

FRANK repeatedly slaps TED in the face and head.

FRANK

How dare you speak to me like that. I'm your father. I'm your father . . . I love you son, I do , I do, I love you. It's been three months since Rivas got out and - well, he's still breathing right? He's the pusher that gave Nicky those drugs and he's still walking. You said you'd take care of it.

TED

He did his time.

FRANK

Don't defend him, not when Nicky's six feet under. I'm not asking - I'm telling you find him and bring him to me.

FRANK gets out of the car, closes the door and leans in through the window taking the remaining cup of coffee.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I'll finish him myself if you don't got the stomach for it just bring him to me son.

EXT. ASTORIA PARK - AFTERNOON

Watching the seagulls, TED pulls out a pack of LUCKY'S. He leans against the guard rail over looking the East River and lights a cigarette.

TED (V.O.)

There are many things that I've done in my life that I know I'll go to hell for. Most of them I can justify. Like the Barnett brothers, they deserved what they got . . .

FLASH ON:

One MAN lays dead on the ground with a blood soaked pillow case over his head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

While a SECOND MAN drenched in blood begs for mercy as TED swings a bat crushing the SECOND MAN's skull.

TED (V.O.)

. . . but there are some that haunt me to this day and I'm afraid what I'm about to do will haunt me till my last breath.

PARK BENCH

TED sits on a park bench chain smoking.

CHRISTOPHER, a stout ASIAN MAN, comes along and sits next to TED.

TED puts an envelope between CHRISTOPHER and himself.

THEY sit in silence.

TED

Sometimes I look at my hands at night before I go to sleep and I think. I stare at them and wonder what the hell is this life for? Then I think what stupid little creatures we are. A joke, an amusement for our gods, an after thought at best . . . and then I realize it doesn't matter. What we do with this life because in the end we all break down and become dead. Dying is a debt we all must pay and it don't matter how it gets settled. When you find him - well, you know . . .

CHRISTOPHER tucks the envelope inside his jacket.

TED grabs CHRISTOPHER's arm.

TED (CONT'D)

When my car's dirty I go get it cleaned. If your car's dirty take it to the one on Northern, they do good work.

INT. CHRISTOPHER'S CAR - DAY

A cascade of water, soap and gyrating brushes in assorted colors engulf CHRISTOPHER's car.

CHRISTOPHER sits behind the wheel with both hands on his lap staring through the man made storm.

Light filters in the car as it slowly finishes its ride.

HANDS with towels caress the car's exterior.

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CONTINUED: (2)

CHRISTOPHER looks up and smile as he sees a familiar face,  
KEVIN RIVAS.

CHRISTOPHER pulls down the window as a MEXICAN wipes it dry.

CHRISTOPHER  
RIVAS!

KEVIN RIVAS turns to the voice and is instantly frozen in  
place when he sees CHRISTOPHER smiling in his car.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

ALICE lays on a hospital bed with bandages seeping with blood  
wrapped around her head.

TWO DETECTIVES stand at the foot of her bed ignoring her.

DETECTIVE 1  
Did they do a rape kit when she came in?

DETECTIVE 2  
(smirks)  
Trust me, IT doesn't need one.

A NURSE enters the room.

NURSE  
I'm sorry but she needs her rest.

DETECTIVE 2  
Yeah let's let the princess get her  
beauty sleep.

ALICE turns her head slowly away from the DETECTIVES.

OUTSIDE ALICE'S ROOM

The TWO DETECTIVES walk out of ALICE's room towards the  
elevator.

DETECTIVE 1  
So what do you think?

DETECTIVE 2  
It doesn't add up but who cares . . .  
Another low life whore trader down for  
the count and that thing in there might  
not be so lucky with the next guy she  
sword fights with.

The elevator door opens and TED walks out wearing a baseball  
cap tipped low covering his face. The TWO DETECTIVES enter  
the elevator.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DETECTIVE 1  
Pizza?

DETECTIVE 2  
Sounds good.

The elevator doors close.

ALICE'S ROOM

TED stands in the doorway silently looking at ALICE.

ALICE turns her head and sees TED.

She smiles.

EXT. COBBLE STONE ROAD - NIGHT

An empty road surrounded by industrial buildings and one parked car.

INT. CHRISTOPHER'S CAR - NIGHT

CHRISTOPHER sits behind the steering wheel peeling an orange.

He places the orange peels on the dashboard.

Two bright lights beam off his rear view mirror.

INT. TED'S CAR - NIGHT

TED pulls up behind Christopher's car.

He turns off the engine but leaves his lights on.

CHRISTOPHER'S CAR

CHRISTOPHER looks at his peeled orange and puts it down on a napkin gently on the passenger side seat.

CHRISTOPHER opens his door.

TED'S CAR

TED watches CHRISTOPHER stumble out of his car and walk over to his trunk.

COBBLE STREET

CHRISTOPHER taps on the trunk and it springs open.

TED exits his car and walks over to CHRISTOPHER.

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CONTINUED:

CHRISTOPHER reaches inside the trunk and throws a HUGE ORANGE at TED.

CHRISTOPHER  
You've neva seen oranges dat big - not here anyway.

TED catches the orange.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)  
Hormones make dem grow, I tink.

TED holds the orange and glances around, taking in the surroundings.

TED  
I hope you didn't bring me here to talk about fruit.

CHRISTOPHER  
Business . . .

TED  
The only business I'm talking about is Rivas.

CHRISTOPHER  
Me too.

TED  
Cut the crap, you got him or not?

CHRISTOPHER  
I do but I want more . . .

TED  
More what?

CHRISTOPHER  
More work, more moonneeyy!!!! I work overtime on his ass so I want more money.

TED walks over to CHRISTOPHER and looks into the trunk.

KEVIN RIVAS is a bloody mess and forcibly contorted by duct tape.

TED  
Get him out of the god damn trunk!

CHRISTOPHER  
Ooh, relax tough guy - I got him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHRISTOPHER reaches into the trunk and yanks KEVIN out by his legs.

KEVIN falls to the ground.

KEVIN makes eye contact with TED and screams through the tape that covers his mouth.

CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)  
See, I told ya, I put work in on him.  
More work, more MONEY!

In one motion TED raises the huge orange and shoves it in CHRISTOPHER'S face while pressing the muzzle of his gun into the orange and pulling the trigger.

A flash of light followed by a muffled sound of a gunshot violently crashes through CHRISTOPHER'S skull.

CHRISTOPHER falls to the ground inches away from KEVIN'S face.

KEVIN sobs as he looks into the lifeless eyes of his tormentor.

EXT. TED'S CAR - DAWN

TED drives his car over the Triboro bridge (RFK bridge).

INSIDE TED'S CAR

KEVIN sits in the backseat unrestrained but against his will.

TED  
I know you don't see it yet but tonight  
it all ends.

KEVIN stares out the window.

TED (CONT'D)  
I'm not stupid enough to think you could  
ever forgive me.

TED exits off the bridge to Randall's Island. The green grass of this island hides under the dawn sky and towering bridge above.

The Manhattan skyline serves as a backdrop with its bright lights and tall buildings piercing the sky.

TED pulls into an empty lot that hugs the East River.

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CONTINUED:

TED (CONT'D)

All I want you to do is tell the truth.  
Not to me, I know how it ends.

KEVIN

To who?

A pair of headlights pulls up behind TED'S car.

TED

Whatever happens I just want you to know  
I'm sorry for . . . Everything.

TED'S front passenger door opens.

FRANK has his hand on the door but does not go inside the car. He turns from TED'S car and walks away a few feet.

FRANK, nervous, takes a deep breath and wipes away tears from his face with trembling hands.

He grabs his chest, winces in pain and takes out a couple of pills from his pocket.

He chases it down with 1/5 of whiskey.

FRANK'S hands leaves his chest with trembling determination and walks back to TED'S car.

INSIDE TED'S CAR

KEVIN stares out the window looking at FRANK with nervous eyes.

KEVIN

What's he doing here?

TED

He needs to know.

FRANK enters the car.

TED, FRANK and KEVIN all sit in silence.

TED (CONT'D)

Pop . . .

FRANK looks back and steals a glance at KEVIN.

FRANK

I thought he'd be bigger? I thought  
you'd be bigger. You're just a kid.  
(To TED)  
You do that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TED shakes his head no.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(Smiles)

Of course not. I'm curious kid. Did you know my boy Nicky died on his birthday?

KEVIN

Yes.

FRANK

So you knew my boy.

KEVIN

Sir I just want to . . .

FRANK

Don't sir me! Politeness won't get you out of this. I'm not some kike, liberal Judge who thinks five years is punishment for murdering my boy with your spic, junkie ways.

KEVIN

Fuck you!

TED

Pop!

FRANK looks at TED.

FRANK

You never had the stomach for anything. You're a coward. Plain and simple, through and through . . .

FRANK pulls out a small Bible from his jacket and places it on the dashboard.

Alongside the Bible FRANK rests a snub nose .22 handgun.

TED

KEVIN, tell my father how my junkie brother died.

FRANK slaps TED in the face.

FRANK

Don't call him that!

TED

Oh, it gets better Pop just listen to what KEVIN has to say.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FRANK

What's to tell me about? He overdosed  
cause of this . . .

TED

It's okay KEVIN, tell the old man  
everything.

FRANK

Don't make me out to be some joke - you  
got something to tell me, then tell me.

TED

You want the long of it or the short.

FRANK

Just tell me . . .

TED

He was as you would put it, a FAGOLI, a  
fag Pop! KEVIN back here wasn't his  
pusher, he was his . . .

FRANK

Stop it!!! This is Nicky we're talking  
about!

TED

The drugs he overdosed on, I gave it to  
him as a birthday present.

FRANK

You have no shame boy!

KEVIN

It's true, all of it. I loved your son.

FRANK sobs uncontrollably into himself.

FRANK

You've taken everything from me. You cut  
me deeper than you'll ever know. Please,  
I beg of you don't ruin my memory of my  
baby boy.

KEVIN

I held him in my arms, he didn't die  
alone. I told him I loved him. That's  
why I was arrested because I didn't leave  
him. I got caught and when I wouldn't  
tell them where I got the drugs they put  
me away. I loved Nicky.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

FRANK slumped over with grief takes the gun off the dashboard and turns to KEVIN.

FRANK

(A long pause)

Thank you . . . for holding him, for not letting him die alone - go now, please - go.

KEVIN and FRANK look into each other's eyes for a moment and all is understood.

KEVIN gets out of the car leaving the back door open.

TED

Now you know. It's something that I had to live with for all these years.

FRANK caresses TED'S face with his trembling hands.

FRANK

My poor son. My poor, poor son.

TED begins to weep.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Now live with this.

FRANK takes his .22, puts it to his chest and pulls the trigger.

FRANK slumps to the passenger window gasping for every breath.

TED repeatedly punches the steering wheel.

TED

(Screaming)

No, no, no . . .

OUTSIDE TED'S CAR

Everything is quiet. The morning sun is awakening. The birds are chirping and life goes on.

A flash of light illuminates the car briefly interrupting the peaceful morning outside.

A phone rings from inside TED's car.

INSIDE TED'S CAR

TED lays motionless as his phone by his side rings.

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CONTINUED:

The caller ID displays a picture of ALICE as it rings.

EXT. HOSPITAL - MORNING

ALICE stands outside the hospital wearing borrowed sweat pants and a white t shirt.

Her hair is in a stocking cap and a auburn wig is in her hands.

She stands there naked to the world waiting for TED to pick up his phone.

INT. - TED'S CAR - MORNING

FRANK'S lifeless body rests on the passenger window as ALICE'S phone call echoes throughout the car.

EXT. HOSPITAL

ALICE looks around hoping to see a familiar face.

Just as she is about to hang up she jumps when she hears TED'S voice on the line.

TED  
(Cell phone)  
Hello?

ALICE  
Teddy?

TED  
(Cell phone)  
Yeah.

ALICE  
I need a place to stay.

INT. TED'S CAR - MORNING

TED closes the trunk of his car while speaking into the phone.

TED  
Sure thing, I just need to drop someone off.

FADE OUT.