

FATAL OBSESSION

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. PARK - DAY

The afternoon sun beams down on nature. A jogging trail snakes along the park outskirts. A pond is in the center. PEOPLE enjoy the beautiful day, fishing, jogging, etc.

EXT. PARK - PARKING LOT - DAY

A car pulls in. Two WOMEN (20s), dressed in running attire, get out and head to the trail.

WOMAN #1  
Ready to do some cardio?

WOMAN #2  
Eat my dust.

Woman #2 bolts ahead. Her amused companion races after her.

EXT. PARK - JOGGING TRAIL - DAY

The women jog in a more secluded area, largely shaded by mass trees. An incline is just off to one side.

Woman #2 stops suddenly near the edge. She attempts to massage her calf while standing on the other foot. Her face contorts in pain.

Woman #1 stops to look back.

WOMAN #1  
What's wrong?

WOMAN #2  
Cramp.

She loses her balance and topples down the incline.

WOMAN #1  
Annie!

BOTTOM OF HILL

Woman #2 rolls to a stop. Slightly shaken, she sits up and picks leaves out of her hair.

At the top, her friend clutches a tree as she watches with concern.

WOMAN #1  
Are you okay?

WOMAN #2  
Yeah, I'm fine.

She reaches out with her hand to push herself up. Touches the decaying hand of a female corpse and jumps back. Next to the woman's body is a man in similar condition.

Woman #2 screams.

INT. BARTON HOUSE - ART ROOM - DAY

DANA BARTON (40), creative and dedicated, a once happy woman who has lost her way, paints on a canvas. A picture of a majestic beach with rolling waves slapping against the shore. Seagulls fly overhead. She is extremely talented.

Around the room, numerous other paintings hang on the walls. A few are still on stands. Some are landscape paintings. Several are of her family - a husband, daughter in her late teens, and a pre-teen son.

Dana uses careful brush strokes to add dimension to the painting. The artistic creation means a great deal to her.

RAND (O.S.)  
Mom?

DANA  
In here!

Dana's son RANDY (RAND) BARTON (12), energetic and bright, enters the room.

RAND  
Can I go to Marty's house?

DANA  
Did you do your homework?

RAND  
Sure did. I even did some of Friday's.

DANA  
I was a believer before the overkill.

RAND  
But Mom...

DANA  
Don't Mom me. Go do your homework, and then we'll talk about Marty's house.

Rand groans his discontent as he schlepps from the room.

Dana grins.

The doorbell RINGS. Dana cleans her hands on a paint stained towel and leaves the room.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

A beautiful Christmas tree holds a prized position in the corner. Several wrapped gifts are under it.

Dana opens the door to her next door neighbor, RUTH EVANS (70s), a sweet older lady who oozes elderly charm. She carries a paper plate covered with foil and holds the leash of her small DOG, Henry.

RUTH

Hello, dear. I made your lovely family some cookies.

She holds out the plate. Dana accepts it.

DANA

Thank you, Ruth. Would you like to come in?

RUTH

I have more cookies in the oven so I need to be going. Kiss that boy of yours for me.

Ruth heads off the porch, Henry by her side.

Dana smiles warmly at the lady as she closes the door.

INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

KURT BARTON (42), used to be a fun guy but work has choked the fun loving nature out of him, suit and tie for his profession, enters after work. He loosens his tie.

KURT

Dana?

He goes to the...

KITCHEN

... and turns on the light. Nice with granite countertops and a large island. The sink is empty. So is the stove.

Kurt sighs his discontent and turns toward the art room down the hall.

INT. ART ROOM - EVENING

Dana steps back to proudly check her finished masterpiece.

KURT (O.S.)  
Seriously?

Dana turns, finds Kurt standing in the doorway.

DANA  
What?

KURT  
No dinner again.

DANA  
I've been busy.

Dana moves one of her finished paintings to the floor and sets up a blank canvas on the stand in its place.

KURT  
I don't mind that you have your little hobby, but I'd like to have food on the table when I get home.

Dana's face tightens as she moves closer to Kurt.

DANA  
That new cafe on Third Street opens next month.

KURT  
So?

DANA  
I told you five times they will be selling art from local artists. This could be my big break.

KURT  
Selling a painting in a coffee shop. Yep. That will make you rich and famous.

Hurt reflects in Dana's eyes.

KURT  
I'll order pizza.

He steps away.

Dana angrily cleans her hands on the towel.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Kurt and Rand eat delivered pizza at the counter.

All cleaned up, Dana joins them. Puts a slice on a plate. Eats in silence. Kurt avoids eye contact as he munches on his piece.

Rand notices.

RAND  
Why can't I have normal parents?

DANA  
We're normal.

RAND  
Really. I don't see any of my friends' parents fight every day.

KURT  
I just don't think it's too much to ask to have a home-cooked meal once in a while.

DANA  
You have two hands.

They engage in a heated stare.

RAND  
All right, kids. Go to your room without dessert. Geez.

Rand leaves the room with his plate of pizza.

Kurt and Dana struggle to meet each other's eyes.

DANA  
Can we call a truce?

KURT  
Agreed.

Kurt takes Dana into his arms.

INT. INSURANCE OFFICE - MAIN ROOM - MORNING

Many EMPLOYEES shuffle about as they do their daily routine. Several desks are hidden inside cubicles.

The office is decorated for Christmas with a full-size tree near the elevator to greet customers.