

THE COOKIE CUTTER

Written by

Christanna Lee

318 Wild Clover Way Unit D, Simi Valley, CA 93065  
805-304-3730

1

INT. BATHROOM - DAWN

1

Darkness. Nothingness.

A deep red-orange glow burns through the black and we see slick white walls, wet with moisture.

There are candles lit; we understand now where the light is coming from.

Movement in the darkness echoes: it's water trickling, swaying.

A long, feminine leg lifts into view, breaking the emptiness. It's slick with foam. A hand slides up from ankle to knee, fingers grazing scars and scabs etched into the, otherwise, smooth surface.

There is music playing in the distance, soft with a romantic, melancholy appeal. OLD MUSIC, from another era, crackling on a turntable.

The leg bends down to dip back into the steaming water. Submerged within the foam is a woman in her mid-30's [LYSSA]. Her eyes are a glaze, her skin glistening with sweat. Her hand reaches out for a short glass filled with ice and some kind dark liquid. She drinks from it, sets it back down, and continues to stare at nothing.

2

INT. ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

2

LYSSA stands naked in front of a window, her skin and hair still laced with soap and sweat. She watches as the sun breaks over the horizon.

The crackly music still plays in the background. Her fingers twitch to the rhythm, until the music stops.

She stops. Pauses.

Finally, she grabs a robe and covers her body, turning from the light of the morning sun.

FADE TO BLACK.

3

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

3

LYSSA BRUSHES HER TEETH.

COMBS HER HAIR.

POPS IN SOME PILLS WITH A COFFEE CHASER.

A DOORBELL RINGS.

4 INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 4

LYSSA opens the front door.

A man in his mid-thirties [SAM], handsome and dark, greets LYSSA with a smile and the two of them follow to his car.

CUT TO:

5 EXT.INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS 5

LYSSA sits in silence as SAM drives. He talks about work and how boring it is and that the two of them should take some time off.

LYSSA slowly turns her head to look at him. She seems in a trance. Her eyes lifeless.

SAM doesn't take notice.

Eventually they pull into a packed parking lot of a business center. The BUILDING is gray and bleak.

CUT TO:

6 EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS 6

SAM continues his friendly, albeit solo, conversation with LYSSA as they make their way across the pavement to the GRAY BUILDING.

They weave through the PARKED CARS when suddenly a LOUD HORN breaks LYSSA'S trance. She grabs SAM'S arm and pulls him back.

A CAR narrowly misses SAM. The CAR speeds off and out of the lot and into the street.

SAM  
(muttering)  
Asshole. What the hell was that  
for?

SAM notices LYSSA is still gripping his arm. He is unsettled by her panic-stricken expression and iron-like grip.

SAM (CONT'D)  
 (gently)  
 Hey, what's going on with you?

SAM carefully loosens LYSSA'S grip from his arm.

LYSSA'S eyes grow wide and she tries to get a better hold of SAM'S arm, as if letting go would make her fall.

SAM (CONT'D)  
 Lyssa, did you hear me?

Finally...

LYSSA  
 Yes. I'm sorry.

SAM  
 Are you okay?

LYSSA  
 Yes. I just...thought I'd lose you.

Pause.

SAM  
 You won't lose me.

LYSSA smiles. SAM lets her hold on tighter to his arm, but there is a wariness to his look.

The two of them continue their way across the pavement and into the GRAY BUILDING.

FADE OUT.

7 INT. OFFICE - LATER

7

LYSSA sits at a desk in front of a computer. She is in a cubicle among a long line of many other identical cubicles.

SAM is sitting on the opposite side of the office, trapped in his cubicle, typing away.

Voices murmur within each box. Work chatter. But no one can be seen.

LYSSA types on her keyboard robotic-like. She glances up and meets SAM'S eyes. He smiles and waves discretely.

She smiles back, the first moment of true serenity, and turns her focus back to the computer.

The work chatter quiets. Shadows stretch.

LYSSA looks up and notices SAM isn't at his desk. Panic begins to flood her chest.

She looks around and notices the cubicles are completely empty. NO ONE is here. She is completely alone. Isolated.

LYSSA looks back to where SAM should be. Her body stiffens. A high pitch SOUND builds around her, surrounds her. The SILENCE is deafening.

LYSSA  
(desperate whisper)  
Sam? Are you there?

Nothing.

LYSSA (CONT'D)  
Sam!

The NOTHING grows louder.

LYSSA reaches to cover her ears. We see her speak, but all we hear is the dead drone of silence. LYSSA's mouth opens up to scream, but all that remains is a piercing hum.

SAM  
Lyssa.

A hand touches her shoulder.

LYSSA jumps at the touch. She turns and sees SAM standing behind her, smiling his peaceful smile.

SAM (CONT'D)  
You ready to go?

LYSSA  
(bewildered)  
Yeah.

She stands and pauses.

LYSSA (CONT'D)  
I thought...you'd left.

SAM  
(smiling, but cautious)  
Nope. Still here.

Then.

SAM (CONT'D)  
 Are you sure you're doing okay? You seem...

Long pause.

LYSSA  
 (worried)  
 What?

SAM  
 (smiling again)  
 Never mind. It's okay.

LYSSA  
 I haven't slept.

SAM  
 I know.

LYSSA  
 I'm sorry.

SAM shrugs as if to say "I know" again. He turns around and heads down the aisle of cubicles.

CUT TO BLACK.

8 EXT. CAR - DUSK 8

SAM drives LYSSA back to her house.

9 EXT. HOUSE FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS 9

LYSSA  
 You sure you don't want to come in?

SAM  
 Yeah, I've got to have an early night.

LYSSA  
 I really am sorry about today. I haven't been--

SAM  
 Sleeping. I know.

LYSSA  
 See you tomorrow?

SAM  
Yep.

LYSSA  
Okay.

She hesitates.

LYSSA (CONT'D)  
Goodnight.

Sam smiles softly.

SAM  
G'night.

He leaves.

LYSSA closes the door.

CUT TO:

10A INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

10A

LYSSA OPENS THE FRIDGE AND TAKES OUT A BOX OF CHINESE FRIED RICE.

SHE EATS.

SHE TOSSES BOX AND LOOKS AT AN WRAPPED FORTUNE COOKIE.

LYSSA cracks open the cookie and pulls out a piece of paper. She stares at it. It's blank. LYSSA frowns.

SHE CRUSHES THE COOKIE AND PAPER IN HER HAND.

LYSSA TAKES A CHEF'S KNIFE OUT OF A DRAWER.

10B INT. KITCHEN TO HALLWAY - SAME

10B

We follow her as she makes her way down a hall and to the LAST ROOM. She opens a door, walks through and closes it. We wait on the other side. Alone. Isolated.

Seconds feel like minutes as they tick by.

We hear movement on the other side of the door, but all else is dead quiet.

We follow down to the crack of the door. A dim light shines out from beneath.

Without warning, the door opens, and we watch LYSSA'S bare-feet exit the room, closing the door behind her. We follow back down the hall, all the while noticing the knife laced in dark blood.

CUT TO:

10C INT. KITCHEN - SAME 10C

LYSSA DROPS BLOODY KNIFE INTO SINK.

SHE TURNS ON WATER.

SHE CLEANS THE KNIFE.

LYSSA DRIES THE KNIFE AND RETURNS IT TO THE DRAWER.

SHE PULLS HER SLEAVES DOWN TO HER HANDS AND EXITS THE KITCHEN.

CUT TO:

10D INT. BEDROOM - SAME 10D

LYSSA climbs into bed and lays flat on her back. She stares up at the ceiling.

LYSSA  
(whispering)  
Sleep.

Her eyes close.

FADE TO BLACK.

11 INT. BEDROOM - MORNING 11

The sun burns into LYSSA'S bedroom. Hot and sticky. She is asleep in bed. Her skin is covered in sweat.

There is heat radiating into her back and she became all too aware of a body nestling right behind her. An arm, a leg--hot limbs wrap around her, trap her. For a second, she thought it might have been SAM. SAM certainly wouldn't have snuck into her home in the middle of the night while she was asleep, much less climb into bed with her!

The HAND moves, warm and big--bigger than SAM'S, she notices--and travels up her waist. LYSSA freezes, not knowing what to expect.

MAN  
(whispering)  
Don't move.

LYSSA stiffens.

And then, with sudden ferocity, she jams her elbow into the side of the intruder as hard as she could.

The MAN rolls away from her, howling in shock and pain, while LYSSA rolls the opposite direction and crashes to the floor.

MAN (CONT'D)  
(exclaiming)  
Baby! What is wrong with you?!

LYSSA peers over the edge of the bed and sees a man curled up in a ball. He has shaggy dark hair, unevenly tanned skin, lean muscles, and dark blue eyes. The grimaced at her through thick lashes. She knew those eyes. She loved those eyes.

LYSSA  
Ben! I'm sorry. I'm so sorry!

She kisses BEN'S lower stomach where she had jabbed him. This was her fiancé. How could she forget him?

She keeps on kissing him, smothering him with her body until she reaches his mouth, and then holds on tight, as if breathing him in, stopping his breath.

BEN struggles beneath her, gently prying her fingers, arms, and lips off of him.

BEN  
Hold on. Just...wait a second.

He pushes LYSSA'S face up to look at him. Her long hair cascades down into his face like a suffocating deluge.

LYSSA  
I'm sorry! I didn't mean to hurt you.

BEN

Yeah, I got that. That's not what's  
freaking me out.

Pause.

BEN (CONT'D)

You're acting like you didn't even  
know I was there. Or know who I  
was.

LYSSA

You weren't. You were gone--I  
mean...

Her voice fades.

BEN, his dark blue eyes full of concern, is really here,  
looking back up at LYSSA. The love in his eyes is so obvious,  
so tangible through his fingertips brushing through her hair,  
as though he'd never left at all.

LYSSA looks at him, soaks it up as much as she can, hoping it  
isn't a dream, knowing it couldn't be, because he feels so  
real.

Finally...

LYSSA (CONT'D)

I had a bad dream. A very, very bad  
dream.

BEN

(wryly)

A dream that made me the bad guy?  
You're getting dangerous to sleep  
with.

He pulls her in closely. Playfully.

LYSSA

No, no. You weren't the bad guy,  
you were...gone. You left me. Said  
you didn't love me anymore. And we  
were fighting...and I lost...

She stops. The words freeze in her throat. Her neck muscles  
bulge.

BEN

(carefully)

Lost what?

LYSSA  
(barely a whisper)  
Sam.

Pause.

BEN  
You lost...Sam?

LYSSA  
Yes...

Another pause.

BEN  
Lyssa...You need to stop doing  
this.

LYSSA  
Doing what?

BEN  
This!

He pushes her off of him and slides off the bed. Then he disappears into the adjoining bathroom.

LYSSA  
I'm confused. Why are you angry  
with me right now?

The TOILET flushes and BEN comes back out. He stands at the foot of the bed.

BEN  
(frustrated, angry)  
Sam died, remember? He was hit? By  
a car?

Pause.

BEN (CONT'D)  
I don't know why we keep having the  
same conversation.

LYSSA  
Wait, wait. What do you mean the  
same conversation?

BEN  
This same conversation! That we  
have every fucking week.

LYSSA  
Hold on! Just wait a minute!

BEN takes a breath.

LYSSA (CONT'D)  
I saw him yesterday. I was with  
him. We went to work--

BEN  
(muttering)  
I'm sure you did.

Pause.

LYSSA  
What does that mean?

BEN  
What else did you do at work?

LYSSA  
I don't understand.

BEN  
What. Else. Did. You. Do.

LYSSA's blood goes cold.

LYSSA  
Nothing.

BEN moves in closer.

BEN  
(wickedly)  
Nothing? You didn't stay at work?  
With Sam? When no one else was  
around? You didn't pull him onto  
your desk? You didn't slide your  
body over him? Crush him? Tear at  
him?

LYSSA  
(horrified)  
What?

BEN  
Cut him?

LYSSA  
No--

BEN  
Dissect him?

LYSSA  
Stop it!

BEN  
Take a look at his insides?

LYSSA  
(forcefully)  
I said stop!

LYSSA stands, her body rigid with anger.

BEN softens suddenly, his violent anger dissipating into sadness.

BEN  
We're not yours.

Pause.

BEN (CONT'D)  
I'm not yours.

LYSSA braces. She feels reality closing in. Slicing her. Cutting her. Suffocating her.

Finally, she breathes.

LYSSA  
But...You will be.

BEN'S visage darkens.

BEN  
No.

With that, he turns around and disappears down the hall.

LYSSA stands frozen. The same deafening SOUND comes, blocking out all logic, beating out her brain. She lifts her hands to her ears and opens her mouth wide, but all that is heard is the same high pitch, ear piercing hum.

CUT TO:

We see THE KNIFE drop into the kitchen sink. It's slick with blood.

LYSSA is leaning heavily over the sink, her eyes red with pain and tears.

SHE POPS OPEN A BOTTLE OF DARK LIQUID.

SHE POURS INTO A SHORT GLASS, NO ICE.

SHE LIGHTS A CANDLE.

12A INT. BATHROOM - SAME TIME

12A

LYSSA steps into a tub thick with soap. Candlelight glows in dark corners, casting sharp and uneven shadows along the wall.

The same OLD MUSIC we heard before, plays again in the distance. It echoes hauntingly against the wet walls.

LYSSA sinks deeper into the steaming water, the glass with dark liquid grasped in her hand.

After a moment, her teeth clench and her hand flexes.

Suddenly, the glass shatters between her fingers, the dark liquid spurting out and down the white tub.

LYSSA is curiously surprised. She slowly looks at her hand and sees dark blood seeping out of a small cut in her palm. She takes her unharmed hand and gently traces something into the blood with her finger.

It's a smiley face.

CUT TO BLACK.

13 INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

13

The sun burns into LYSSA'S bedroom. Hot and sticky. Again. Only this time, she is alone.

LYSSA is asleep in bed. Her skin is covered in sweat. Slowly, her eyes open, almost painfully. She stares blankly at the window.

LYSSA'S phone rings. She doesn't react right away, but eventually moves to answer it.

LYSSA

Hello?

MAN  
Lyssa? Are you all right?

LYSSA  
Who is this?

Pause.

MAN  
It's Sam.

Another pause.

LYSSA  
(unbelieving)  
What?

SAM  
I'm at your front door. Can you  
please let me in?

LYSSA looks at her phone in horror.

LYSSA  
(muttering to herself)  
It can't be.

Then...

LYSSA (CONT'D)  
You're dead. You're supposed to be  
dead.

Pause.

SAM  
Lyssa, please open the door.  
Everything is going to be all  
right. Just come to the door.

LYSSA  
No no. You're not here. I'm not  
hearing you.

SAM  
Don't panic. It's okay. You just  
need to let me in.

LYSSA  
(inaudible muttering)

Then...

SAM  
Lyssa...please.

LYSSA comes to.

LYSSA  
(hesitantly)  
Okay.

CUT TO:

14 INT. FRONT DOOR - SAME TIME 14

LYSSA opens the door and sees SAM standing on the other side.  
He is distraught.

LYSSA chokes in shock, then throws her arms around him,  
clutching him desperately.

LYSSA  
You're alive! You're here!

She kisses him all over his face.

SAM stiffens and carefully pushes her off of him, even though  
we can tell he desires it.

SAM  
Let's...go inside for a minute.  
Okay?

LYSSA nods happily, not letting go of his arm.

14A INT. FRONT DOOR TO KITCHEN TO HALLWAY - SAME TIME 14A

Once inside, SAM makes his way to the kitchen and LYSSA  
releases her grasp on him. SAM leans against the sink.

SAM  
You didn't make it to work. Again.

LYSSA  
I...what time is it?

SAM  
It's past six. PM. Did you sleep  
the whole day?

LYSSA  
(shocked)  
Yes...I...guess I did. I had a bad  
dream. Couldn't wake from it.

SAM turns to look behind him, noticing the KNIFE in the kitchen sink. It hasn't been cleaned, black blood crusted on the edges. SAM then notices LYSSA'S hand bandaged up.

SAM  
Oh, Lyssa...I thought you wouldn't  
do this again.

LYSSA glances at the sink in confusion, then at her hand.

LYSSA  
I didn't.

SAM  
Then what do you call this?

He gestures to the sink and her hand.

LYSSA  
I had a bad dream...Ben...

SAM  
(snapping)  
Ben?--

LYSSA  
--Ben was here yesterday. We had a  
fight and then he--

SAM  
Ben's dead!

LYSSA freezes. Then...

SAM (CONT'D)  
(sadly)  
Ben's been dead. You know this. I  
know you know this. Lyssa, we go  
through this all the time. And you  
missed work again! I can't keep  
covering for you--

LYSSA  
Ben said YOU were dead.

Pause.

SAM  
(impatiently)  
What?

LYSSA  
He said YOU were dead. In my dream.  
And I didn't believe him. I  
couldn't. I can't...

LYSSA slumps to the floor.

SAM goes to her and cautiously puts his arms around her.

SAM  
Shhhhh.

LYSSA  
I'm sorry. I don't know what's  
happening.

SAM  
I know.

LYSSA  
I can't seem to get control--

SAM  
I know.

LYSSA  
I don't know what's real and what's  
not. My mind...feels like it's  
trying to kill me. And I can't--

SAM  
--Sleep. I know.

Pause.

LYSSA  
You do.

She looks up at him, smiling.

LYSSA (CONT'D)  
Ben...he didn't know. And I'm  
forever sorry.

SAM nods quietly.

LYSSA (CONT'D)  
He wanted to leave me. He wanted to  
die. And I'm sorry.

SAM  
I know you are.

LYSSA sighs.

LYSSA  
You always know.

She gently puts her hand on his cheek.

LYSSA (CONT'D)  
You won't leave me?

SAM smiles, but then slowly pulls back and stands.

SAM  
Lyssa, I am here for you...

Then...

SAM (CONT'D)  
But I can't save you.

LYSSA stiffens. Everything goes silent, even though she can still see SAM talking.

Then the SOUND comes back, grows, fills her ears, her MIND, with a deafening low DRONE. She struggles to keep herself from claspng her hands over her ears.

SAM frowns, a confused look crosses his eyes.

The SOUND becomes unbearable. She can't help herself but curl into a ball, finally covering her ears.

LYSSA  
(barely audible)  
Make it stop.

SAM reaches out to her, but then stops.

SAM  
I can't.

He moves away, side-stepping passed her and to the front door.

LYSSA rolls around, desperately clawing at his legs as he passes her.

LYSSA  
Don't leave me.

SAM turns around one more time, his face stricken.

SAM  
I have to.

LYSSA  
Please...help me...

SAM  
I can't.

With that, he disappears, exiting the front door. As it shuts, the SOUND immediately stops, leaving LYSSA whimpering on the floor, alone again.

Seconds go by, seemingly endless.

Then without warning...

LYSSA  
Yes...you can...

LYSSA stands and moves to the kitchen sink. She snatches the KNIFE up and looks at it. Her expression turns to disgust as she grazes her thumb against the dried, black blood on the blade.

Her expression morphs into nothingness as she moves away from the kitchen to the hallway.

She travels to the LAST ROOM, the same one as before, and enters.

CUT TO:

15 INT. LAST ROOM - NIGHT

15

This room is darkly lit.

We only see LYSSA entering from the hallway. She closes the door behind her, knife in hand. We the other hand, she touches a turntable's needle and it begins to play. It is the same OLD MUSIC we've heard before.

LYSSA pulls her long sleeves up to her elbows and kneels to the floor. Her expression, emotionless just seconds before, melts into despair.

Rhythmically, almost in time with the OLD MUSIC, she takes the knife and jabs it downward.

We cannot see where it lands, only that LYSSA grimaces slightly. She lifts the knife and we see that it is fresh with black blood. She stabs down again. And again. Each time, her face contorts in agony.

As she stabs down again, LYSSA goes deadly still.

We pull away slowly, fearfully, and are able to see more of the room.

Laying below LYSSA is a body, a man's body, on top of what appears to be a tarp covered in a type of black crust.

And as we move away further, darkly lit in the shadows, is another man's body, his skin chalky, waxy, as if pumped full of preservatives.

We recognize that these are the bodies of SAM and BEN!

We realize, also, that LYSSA is watching us from the other side of the room. With one hand, she lightly touches her right eye, her left eye, then gently traces an upward grin on her grimacing mouth. As she does so, her lips bend into a smile.

Then without warning, she lifts the knife out of SAM'S dead body high up in the air, never letting us out of her deadly sight.

She freezes.

For only a few seconds.

The SMILE contorts into an animal.

As she plunges the knife back into its dead meat.

CUT TO BLACK.

**END CREDITS**