

LOVE THE MONSTER

Written by

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OVER BLACK

A telephone *RINGS*. Someone picks up.

JASON (V.O.)
Hello?

Long pause. Nothing but static until-

MALE VOICE (V.O.)
Jason Chambers?

JASON (V.O.)
Who's this?

Click. Dial tone.

INT. CONDO - BEDROOM - DAY

JASON CHAMBERS (19) holds a landline telephone to his ear, listening to the dial tone.

He frowns and sets the phone down. After a moment's hesitation, he picks it back up and dials.

RING.

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)
Hello?

JASON
Hey, mom.

MOM (V.O.)
Oh, Jason.
(muffled)
Honey, Jason's on the phone.
(to Jason)
How are you, dear?

JASON
I'm fine. Did you give anyone my
phone number recently?

MOM (V.O.)
Why would I do that?

JASON
I dunno.

MOM (V.O.)
How are you holding out?

JASON

Good. I was wondering if I could
come home for the long weekend.

Jason hears Mom whisper to someone nearby.

MOM (V.O.)

Your father has a vacation planned
already. If you need money-

JASON

-no, I just wanted...can I talk to
dad?

More whispers.

MOM (V.O.)

Have you reconsidered your father's
job offer?

Jason closes his eyes and sighs.

JASON

Yeah.

DAD (V.O.)

Jason, how you doin'?

Jason lights up at the sound of his father's voice.

JASON

Great, I-

DAD (V.O.)

So you've come to your senses about
this whole grad school thing.

JASON

Yes.

DAD (V.O.)

It's not like we couldn't afford
it, but why bother if it won't help
your career?

JASON

Right.

DING. Dong.

JASON (CONT'D)

So can I visit you and mom?

DAD (V.O.)
Was that the doorbell?

JASON
Yes.

DAD (V.O.)
Well, what are you waiting for?
Answer it.

JASON
Can I call you after?

DAD (V.O.)
Sure, just call your mother first.
I might be at the office.

DING. Dong.

JASON (V.O.)
Bye, dad.

DAD
Later, gator.

Click.

Jason grabs a WRIST WATCH and slides it over a matching WATCH TAN.

The digital readout changes from 8:59 AM to
9:00 AM

INT. CONDO - FRONT DOOR - DAY

Jason steps off a staircase winding up to the second floor bedroom. A lavish living room sits behind him.

He opens the front door.

MAILMAN (30), leans against the door frame with a bored look.

At his feet lies a CARDBOARD BOX covered with shipping tape.

Without a word, Mailman casually turns and strolls away.

JASON
Hey, don't I have to sign for this?

Mailman keeps walking.

Jason squats down to read the name and address.

JASON (CONT'D)
What the...

He grabs the box and hurries after Mailman.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Driveways into quaint, two-story condos line either side of the calm avenue.

Jason steps onto the sidewalk.

Mailman passes two DAY LABORERS conversing on a parked pick-up truck stacked with wooden planks.

JASON
Sir! Excuse me!

Mailman turns. Day Laborers regard Jason with mild interest.

Jason raises the box.

JASON (CONT'D)
You got the wrong address.

Day Laborers return to talking in Spanish. Mailman walks over to him.

Jason holds out the cardboard box.

JASON (CONT'D)
I live at 2503 Benton Ave. This
says 2603 Benton Ave. That's where-

Jason looks down at the address.

JASON (CONT'D)
-Regina Wilson lives.

MAILMAN
You mean you're not Regina Wilson?

JASON
What?

DAY LABORER 1 JAMS A LIVE TASER INTO JASON'S SPINE.

Jason CONVULSES and collapses into DAY LABORER 1's arms.

Mailman RIPS open the box and pulls out two lengths of CORD. He tosses them to DAY LABORER 2, who waits in the truck bed.

Day Laborer 1 slips a HOOD over Jason's face and feeds him up to Day Laborer 2.

Mailman hops into the driver's seat and turns over the engine.

Day Laborer 1 JERKS Jason's hands behind his back. He ties them with cords. Day Laborer 2 lifts a plank of wood to reveal a HOLLOW CENTER in the stack.

Day Laborer 1 stuffs Jason face-first into the hollow.

Day Laborer 2 slides the wooden plank back over the opening.

On Jason's watch, the digital readout changes to

9:01 AM

FADE OUT.

JASON'S (HOODED) POV

PITCH BLACK

TRUCK MOTOR GROWLING. SQUEAL of brakes.

A wooden plank disappears, and DAYLIGHT pours through the burlap hood. Someone is barely visible through the cloth.

Jason KICKS at the shape.

The shape grabs Jason's leg and YANKS him out of the hollow.

EXT. PICK UP TRUCK - DAY

Dirt hills on every side. No road in sight.

A SEDAN sits beside the truck.

Day Laborer 1 hauls Jason up for the sedan to see.

The passenger door opens to reveal SANDRA NASCIMENTO (21), a beautiful Brazilian in jeans and a t-shirt, flawless save for the MISSING TIP of her right index finger. Not a birth defect.

Sandra tosses a thick, plastic-wrapped roll of HUNDRED DOLLAR BILLS to Mailman.

JASON
Hey, somebody, help!

Day Laborer 2 KICKS him in the back.

Jason trips over the truck bed and falls face-first.

His head *CRACKS* against the ground.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. UNDERGROUND CELL - ?

An jail cell carved into the rocky substrate nearly a dozen feet below the surface. Black, slimy *FUNGUL GROWTHS* cover the walls.

Jason *WAKES UP* on a thin mattress resting on concrete blocks. Across from Jason is a second concrete-based mattress sinking under a heap of blankets. A *BUCKET* and *METAL CHAIR* clutter the back wall.

A row of *IRON BARS* separates the cell from a small antechamber accessible only by a *LADDER* jutting through a hole in the ceiling.

The sole source of light comes from a single, fat *CANDLE*.

Jason looks toward his feet.

A length of *CORD* ties his ankle to something under the heap of blankets across from him.

Jason wiggles his foot, and his shoe nearly falls off. He squints.

His shoelaces are gone.

JASON

HELLO?

The cord around his ankle *TAUTENS*.

Jason stares at the bulge of blankets.

JASON (CONT'D)

Is someone under that?

Nothing.

JASON (CONT'D)

Who's out there?

Jason reaches for the cord. Rope marks around his wrists are *BLOODY* and *SCABBED*.

The wrist watch is gone, leaving only the tan-line.

Jason takes the cord in his hand.

He TUGS.

JASON (CONT'D)

Anyone-

Something YANKS Jason off the mattress.

He SHRIEKS as blankets EXPLODE into the air.

RICARDO (34), a pale, gaunt body with sunken eyes, towers over Jason. His expression is frozen in a look of hollow indifference; a poker face on a man with nothing to hide.

JASON (CONT'D)

What the fuck! Who the fuck are
you? What the fuck is happening?

Ricardo says nothing.

JASON (CONT'D)

Where the fuck am I? SAY SOMETHING!

Ricardo stares into space. Jason jumps up.

JASON (CONT'D)

I got kidnapped, didn't I? Are you
kidnapped? Jesus, I'm kidnapped.

Jason touches his lacerated wrist and WINCES. He POUNDS
against the bars.

JASON (CONT'D)

HEY, I'M DOWN HERE.

He turns to Ricardo.

JASON (CONT'D)

Where are we? Can anyone hear me?

Ricardo says nothing.

Jason sits down hard on the mattress.

JASON (CONT'D)

This can't be...there's some
mistake.

Ricardo stares at the wall.

JASON (CONT'D)

Will you at least tell me why they
took my shoelaces?

Ricardo's eyes focus on Jason.

RICARDO
So you can't hang yourself.

Hinges *creak*. Light pours through the hole in the antechamber's ceiling.

A WOODEN CHAIR in the corner of the antechamber is now visible.

The *whir* of an electric motor.

Someone climbs down the ladder.

JASON
What should I do? What should I say?

Slim, female calves appear.

Sandra comes into view. Beside her, rope lowers a TRAY of food.

She steps off the ladder, unhooks and tray, and approaches.

The iron bars outline the hinges of BARRED DOOR.

Sandra lays out two BOTTLES of water, four hard-boiled EGGS, four cans of SARDINES, and four BANANAS.

Jason leans against the bars.

JASON (CONT'D)
Why am I here?

SANDRA
I hope you like sardines.

Ricardo appears at Jason's side. He reaches through the bars and grabs his half of the meal.

JASON
Please, you've got the wrong guy.

SANDRA
Eat some sardines.

JASON
Please...

Sandra waits.

Jason tears open a tin of sardines and stares at the oily contents.

He pours some water into his palm and scrubs.

Sandra watches Jason look for something to dry his hands.

SANDRA

Well?

With a grimace, Jason wipes his hands on his dusty shirt and picks up a sardine between his thumb and forefinger.

He sticks it in his mouth.

JASON

I-

SANDRA

Chew.

Jason chews and swallows.

JASON

My parents can get you money. No police or anything.

SANDRA

You don't say?

Sandra pushes the remaining food through the bars.

JASON

Just let me call my mom, and-

SANDRA

I'll ask the management.

JASON

Please, I can't stay here.

SANDRA

What are you so worked up about?
Roof over your head, free food,
armed security.

FOOTSTEPS on the ladder.

JASON

Can you at least untie my leg?

SANDRA

Are you kidding? You're the only
thing holding Ricardo back.

Ricardo stares vacantly at the wall.

GUARD 1, twice Jason's size, barely fits through the hole.

Like ALL GUARDS Jason will see, he wears a hood.

Guard 1 holds a TAPE RECORDER under his armpit.

Sandra takes several steps back and leans against the jagged, rock wall. Guard plants the WOODEN CHAIR next to the ladder.

He turns on the tape recorder and unfolds a list.

GUARD 1

Name?

Jason glances towards Sandra. She nods.

JASON

Jason Chambers.

GUARD 1

Parent's address.

Jason hesitates.

SANDRA

Are you a virgin?

JASON

What? I...uh...

Sandra

How many women have you had sex with?

Jason opens his mouth, flustered.

GUARD 1

Parent's address?

SANDRA

You didn't-

JASON

3482 Brooksdale. La Jolla.

GUARD 1

What is the net worth of your family?

Jason bites his lip. Sandra opens her mouth to ask a question.

JASON
I don't know, really. My dad never
talked to me about it.

GUARD 1
How many times has someone pointed
a gun at you?

JASON
Never.

GUARD 1
How much do your parents think your
life is worth?

Silence. Sandra studies Jason's pained reaction.

JASON
I don't...it depends on if I...

SANDRA
Who should we call for
negotiations?

JASON
My mom. No, the home phone. They
both answer that.

Sandra puts her hand on Guard 1's shoulder.

SANDRA
I've got what I need for now.

Guard 1 sets the tape recorder on the tray. With a *whir*, the
rope retracts into the ceiling.

Guard 1 climbs.

Sandra turns to Jason.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
My name is Sandra Nascimento. You
will remember that for the rest of
your life.