

From The Craving

Act One

(TERRY's tiny, minuscule apartment. He has a laptop.)

TERRY *(typing)*

Fade out. The End.

(He looks up and addresses the audience.)

It all started with the script. My beautiful, wonderful, emotionally scarring screenplay. It was called "A Season of Longing" and I poured my heart and soul into it.

(EMILY dashes on, followed quickly by ROGER. They are very, very emotional.)

ROGER

Emily!

EMILY

No I can't wait Roger!

ROGER

Please! Just give me. One. Chance.

EMILY

You had your chance, Roger. I have to be with my mother now.

ROGER

She doesn't love you the way I love you.

EMILY

I know that Roger. But I must be with her in these final moments.

ROGER

She's going to die anyway, come with me.

EMILY

Please, Roger. Don't say things like that Roger.

ROGER

I'm going to pour my heart and soul into this: I love you. I need you.

EMILY

I need you too, Roger. But my mother needs me more.

(She runs off.)

ROGER

Emily! EMILY!!!!

(ROGER falls to his knees and screams at the top of his lungs.)
EMILY!!!!!!!!!!!!
(He cries in a manly fashion.)

TERRY *(to the audience)*
It went on like that for a hundred and forty-seven pages. It was genius. I imagined audiences weeping openly at its beauty. The plot went like this: Emily—
(EMILY enters)
Was in love with her fiancé, Roger.

Emily. ROGER

Roger. EMILY

I love you. ROGER

Roger was a poor florist with a heart of gold. TERRY

I cannot give you much. But I can give you a ring made of these flowers.
(He produces a ring and puts it on her finger.) ROGER

Oh Roger! EMILY

I love you. ROGER

I know. EMILY

Sadly, though, Emily's Grandmother—
(EMILY'S GRANDMOTHER enters) TERRY

Oh father! Look at the ring Roger made me!
(She shows her the ring to sniff.) EMILY

Dies. From an allergic reaction. TERRY

EMILY'S GRANDMOTHER

Ack.

(EMILY'S GRANDMOTHER dies.)

EMILY

Nooooooo! Why God why?

ROGER

Emily please!

EMILY

I can't even look at you right now!

(She turns away.)

TERRY

And at her grandmother's funeral, her mother—

(DIANE enters)

Who she hadn't seen in many years—

EMILY

Mama?

TERRY

Had some bad news.

DIANE

Emily. I'm sick Emily. Very sick.

EMILY

No!

DIANE

Yes!

EMILY

But you're so young! You're so vital and vibrant like a woman in the rosy sunset of her autumn years. Like the glow a silver maple gets in the fading daylight of a Vermont evening.

DIANE

I'm going to die.

EMILY

No!

ROGER

Maybe I can help.

EMILY

Stay back Roger! I can't even look at you right now!

TERRY

So Emily and her mother rent out a cabin in the Wisconsin woods where they spend a vibrant summer reconnecting. And they learn a thing or two.

EMILY

I learned that I love you. And I respect elderly people now because they have something to contribute to society.

DIANE

And I learned to accept my impending death. Ah.
(She dies.)

ROGER

Emily.

EMILY

Oh Roger.

ROGER

I love you Emily.

EMILY

I love you Roger.

ROGER

Let's kiss in a family friendly way.

EMILY

Let's!

(They kiss in a family friendly way.)

TERRY

The end. It was a beautiful story. Now the only problem was getting a Hollywood producer to look at it. Luckily, I had recently acquired an agent.

(MAX enters on the phone.)

MAX

Okay, so I'm reading this thing. And I'm loving it. I'm just like a pig in poop over here.

TERRY

Really?

MAX

Are you kidding me? Mothers and daughters reconnecting after years of absence? If this were a candy bar I'd weigh five hundred pounds.

TERRY

I don't get it.

MAX

Like I'd eat it, you know?

TERRY

Why would you weigh five hundred pounds though?

MAX

Cause I'd eat it a lot. Like there'd be a lot of these candy bars in a big room of love and I'd just gorge myself on `em, you know? Till I just became this gelatinous mass of you know, caring and sentiment. Like five hundred pounds of sweetness.

TERRY

Huh.

MAX

That'd be awesome. Look, Terry, this is the best thing you've ever given me.

TERRY

This is the only thing I've ever given you.

MAX

Don't even give me anything else. If I can't sell this, I'll go back to running my tow truck business.

TERRY

Aren't you still running your tow truck business?

MAX

That's neither here nor there. I know a guy in San Francisco.

TERRY

Does he produce movies?

MAX

No. But his brother is a hair dresser in Los Angeles, and one of that guy's clients is the stepsister of a famous director. I can't tell you who the director is cause I'm sworn to secrecy. But he's big.

TERRY

Like Steven Spielberg?

MAX

All right I'll give you a hint. Did you see that movie last summer where it was like, there was this guy, and he was in trouble, and then this thing happened and all of a sudden he's like doing all this stuff? And it's like awesome? Critics hated it.

TERRY

I don't know what you're talking about.

MAX

You know, that movie.

TERRY

Um... okay—

MAX

Wait, hold on.

(There's a beeping noise.)

Max's towing.

TERRY

I'm still here.

MAX

Oh.

(Another beeping noise. Soft music plays.)

TERRY

Max was the best agent in town. Unfortunately the town was Millsap, New Jersey.

MAX

You still there?

TERRY

You got a job?

MAX

There's a guy in ditch off the turnpike. He's on fire or something. I don't know, it was hard to make out with all the screaming. Now listen, you are my top priority. All my other clients take a back seat to you.

TERRY

Do you have other clients?

MAX

Yeah I have other clients. My mother's friend Betty, you ever met her? Writes about cats. She's a freaking genius. She has this one screenplay, and it's like I'm in the presence of a divine being when I'm reading it, I'm literally in the mind of the cat.

TERRY

Can we get back to mine please?

MAX

Right. I know this other guy. His name's Bernie. He used to live in Los Angeles, and he knows an actor who used to be roommates with this other guy who was a production assistant at Paramount. And now that guy—

TERRY

Bernie?

MAX

No the other guy. The actor's roommate. He quit his job but now he dog sits for a producer. Like he just lives in this tiny house and takes care of three chihuahuas and that's like all he does. Anyway, I'll get him the script and he'll get it to the producer and then you're golden.

TERRY

Who's the producer?

MAX

I can't tell you that. But he's huge. Just leave everything to me. Wait, hold on again.

(Soft music plays.)

All right I'm coming! Okay, I gotta go. Sorry about that.

TERRY

Do your thing.

MAX

Oh I'm gonna do my thing.

TERRY

You do that.

MAX

You're a genius, Terry.

TERRY

Thank you.

MAX

I mean that. From the bottom of my heart. If I ever died, I'd leave you my kids. Seriously. And you could do whatever you wanted to them. Like, experiment on `em, whatever, just do all kinds of crazy things cause you're that awesome.

TERRY

Thanks.

MAX

My wife's in love with you.

TERRY

Julie?

MAX

Stay away from her. All right, I'll talk to you later. Bye.

TERRY

Bye Max.

(MAX exits.)

So all I had to do was wait.

(TERRY sits down.)

The first day was pretty easy. I didn't think about the script at all. Besides, it would take about three days to get to California by mail. So three days went by. And then I imagined it got read by the people Max knew

(Two PEOPLE enter, reading scripts.)

TWO PEOPLE

This is amazing! This is the most brilliant thing in the history of everything!

TERRY

And then they sent it on to the people they knew.

(Two new PEOPLE enter, the first people hand them the script.)

TWO PEOPLE

This is amazing! This is the most brilliant thing in the history of everything!

TERRY

And then they passed it on, and after that I got a little fuzzy on who had the script, whether it was the stepsister of the producer or the hairdresser of the dogsitter or something. But after two weeks I figured the right people had it.

(MAX enters.)

MAX

I haven't heard anything. Give it time.

(MAX exits.)

TERRY

So I gave it another week. And then another. And then another month passed. And then three months passed. And then six months. And then—

(MAX enters.)

MAX

Terry! How ya doin'?

TERRY

Who is this?

MAX

It's Max!

(no recognition.)

Your agent.

TERRY

Oh.

MAX

Look. I got some great news for you. They love it. They're going to fly you in.

TERRY

Who is?

MAX

I can't tell you. But they're big. Hollywood big.

TERRY

You're kidding me!

MAX

You're gonna be a big star screenwriter person! Wait, hold on.

(soft music plays.)

TERRY *(to the audience)*

So I did whatever any normal person does when they're about to hit it big.

(TERRY jumps up and down and runs around like a madman. He shouts.)

HEY EVERYONE! I MADE IT! I'M GONNA BE A BIG STAR!

OFF-STAGE VOICE

SHUT UP!

TERRY

REMEMBER THE NAME TERRY KYLE MORRIS! CAUSE I'M GOING TO THE OSCARS!

OFF-STAGE VOICE
SHUT UP TERRY KYLE MORRIS!

OFF-STAGE VOICE #2
YOU SHUT UP AND LET TERRY KYLE MORRIS BASK IN HIS MOMENT!

OFF-STAGE VOICE
HOW ABOUT I COME OVER THERE AND BASK IN YOUR MOMENT!

OFF-STAGE VOICE #3
HOW ABOUT BOTH OF YOU SHUT UP!

OFF-STAGE VOICE
WHO ASKED YOU?!

OFF-STAGE VOICE #2
MY COUSIN IS IN THE MAFIA AND HE'S GOING TO WHACK ALL OF YOUSE!

OFF-STAGE VOICE #4
EVERYONE SHUT UP I'M TRYING TO WATCH GENERAL HOSPITAL!

TERRY
I was going to miss New Jersey. California, here I come.

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