

Murder Me Twice
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MURDER ME TWICE

FADE IN:

EXT. STATION HILL, LOUISIANA. 1940'S. TWILIGHT.

The white church steeple towers above the town as lazy weeping willows surrounded by Spanish moss ripple in the quiet breeze. The land is hot and flat. Heat shimmers in the air. The welcome sign to the town is riddled with bullet holes.

WELCOME TO STATION HILL, LA. POP. 2,110

An occasional car travels on the well paved roads that leads toward the plantation homes of the premiere citizens; dirt roads branch off toward the black areas and beyond where the land stretches flat and swampy.

DREWANNA MARTIN

an African American teenager, in a blue checkered dress that has seen better days, trudges down one of the isolated roads. She clutches a large leather book.

A 1940 BLACK FORD TRUCK

Starts down the road, RATTLING, as it goes, slowing as it nears Drewanna. The driver is in shadows.

YOUNG MAN IN TRUCK

(Southern drawl)

Where you going, girl?

Drewanna stops, stands respectfully.

DREWANNA

(Black dialect)

Work, Sir.

YOUNG MAN

Long way from the barn.

DREWANNA

I'm going to cut across the hill.
Don't you worry none. I won't be
late. Them horses is good as groomed.

YOUNG MAN

I've been hearing nice things 'bout
you. Don't you change my mind now.

DREWANNA

No, sir.

She turns and begins walking again.

The truck follows her slowly. The young man leans out but his face is still shadowed.

YOUNG MAN

Since when you need a book to groom
a horse?

DREWANNA

This here book is got the whole world
in it. Pictures and everything.
(she holds open a map)
I'm gonna go places someday.

YOUNG MAN

Like hell you are. No Station Hill
nigger's gonna go anywhere less we
say so.

HER HANDS

shut the book. She clutches it fearfully to her chest.

THE TRUCK STOPS.

The man gets out but only his lower body is seen as he SLAMS
the truck door.

HIS BOOTS

step toward her menacingly.

Her bare feet retreat.

YOUNG MAN

Don't you walk away from me, you
uppity little nigger bitch.

DREWANNA

I didn't mean nothing.

She keeps backing up.

His hand grabs her wrist.

YOUNG MAN

When I say stop, girl, I mean stop.

DREWANNA

Those horses need me. I gotta get
to work.

YOUNG MAN

Maybe I need you first.

They struggle as he yanks on her wrist. Her feet as they slide from under her. The fabric tears and

She SCREAMS.

INT. 2007 - HENLEY AND HARRISON ARCHITECTS - EARLY AM

ANDREA JAMES, mid-30's, her long hair swirls around her face as she rests her head on her arms. Remains of a sandwich and cold coffee at the edge of the desk evidence of an all-nighter; blueprints on one side spread out with several pencils and rulers and a few books on cultural aspects of housing.

The sun rises over the Pacific.

Andrea's dream clearly disturbs her. Her head shoots up as a SCREAM escapes her mouth.

She looks around wildly and then as her heart rate slows, she catches her breath. She swallows hard and reaches for the cold coffee. Grimaces and takes a sip.

Clock reads 7 am.

Phone rings. She jumps. It continues ringing. Hesitantly she picks it up.

ANDREA

Henley and Harrison may I help you?

ZACH (O.S.)

(heavy Southern drawl)

I believe your car's ready, Ma'am.

ANDREA

My car...I...

(recognizing the voice)

Oh, Zach. Don't do that to me. How did you know I was here?

ZACH (O.S.)

You weren't at home. Homer told me to call.

ANDREA

He...right... Look, darling, I am not in the mood for jokes now. I'm trying to finish.

ZACH (O.S.)
Your voice is trembling...and I know
you're not that nervous. *

ANDREA
No. I..I had another one.

ZACH (O.S.)
Those nightmares mean nothing, Andi.

ANDREA
All I know is that I never had them
until Station Hill.
(hoarse whisper)
I'm going to have those tests Dr.
Feldstein recommended. Maybe it's a
medical problem...

ZACH (O.S.)
Jesus, Andi, you're one of the sanest
people I know. You want me there
with you?

SOUND OF ELEVATOR DOOR OPENING

ANDREA
I gotta go. Karen's here.

ZACH (O.S.)
Honey, good luck on the presentation.
Call me later. Okay?

ANDREA
Yeah. Okay.

She hangs up. She wipes away her tears and forces herself to smile as KAREN HENLEY, co-owner of the architecture firm, a stylish and manicured African American strides up to the desk carrying a Starbucks container. She puts down a fresh cup of java and a roll.

KAREN
I thought you were going home early?
What are these tests you're talking
about?
(pushes roll toward
her)
Eat. I don't do step and fetch it
for just anyone.

ANDREA
Thanks.
(takes a bite)
Almost finished.

Grabs up her pencil, refusing to meet Karen's gaze. Karen's hand goes over the sketch stopping Andrea's movement.

KAREN

The tests?

ANDREA

Nothing really.

KAREN

You'd tell me if it was?

ANDREA

Of course, but really Karen...

KAREN

I think you should let Zach be there with you. It's nice to have someone who cares.

ANDREA

And I think we need to ace this presentation.

Karen lifts the pages from Andrea's desk. Studies them. Nods approving and smiles.

KAREN

Go freshened up.

Andrea nods and grabs her purse and starts for the door. Karen grabs one of Andrea's trash pieces. She hits Andrea's back. Andrea turns.

KAREN

If it's any consolation, you are no crazier than I am, Girlfriend.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM. LATER DAY

Andrea's hair is tied back and she's dressed for success. She moves a pointer over the power point display on the screen. In the corner of the room is a model of the center and various conceptions of artists views around the room.

Several men gather around the table. Each has an embossed folder in front of him. SAM FORTNER, a hearty bluff businessman and the obvious leader, leafs through it.

MR. FORTNER

Reposition the low-income housing project toward the sun and it will save this much?

ANDREA

That coupled with our front elevation revisions.

FORTNER

Changes mean money.

ANDREA

That's why I included the time and cost study from the Santa Fe welfare project.

JARED BRACKNEL, attractive but arrogant, seated at the table looks up and laughs as he winks at Andi.

BRACKNEL

She's got you there, Sam.
(opens folder)

FORTNER

We'll take it before the finance committee.

There is a general SHUFFLING of folders and clearing of THROATS as heads shake. The men start to file out. Jared Bracknel hangs back.

BRACKNEL

(thick Southern accent)
Great job, honey.

*

Andrea stiffens at the "honey." Her eyes glaze.

ANDREA

(black dialect)
Yas, Suh.

BRACKNEL

What'd you say?

ANDREA

(flustered)
Nothing.
(gathers her papers)
Did you have any questions?

INT. HOSPITAL X-RAY ROOM. AFTERNOON.

Andrea rolls out of a huge CAT scan tube. Dr. FELDSTEIN, a tweed jacket conservative takes her hand and smiles down at her.

ANDREA

When will you have the test results?

DR. FELDSTEIN

Do you want to talk about what happened?

(offers hand; she refuses)

ANDREA

(sits up on table)

I think I can hold out till Thursday.

DR. FELDSTEIN

There's a prescription for Valium with the receptionist, in case.

ANDREA

I won't need it.

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREET. LATE AFTERNOON.

Andrea drives west along San Vincente. The dying sunlight strikes the window off the car mirror in front of her. She puts her hand in front of her eyes to shield from the light and inhales sharply as she slams on the brake pedal. Cars behind her squeal to a stop.

HORNS HONKING. Other drivers SWEARING.

INT. BARN. 1940'S LATE AFTERNOON.

Drewanna cowers against the black '40 Ford truck parked at an angle. In the background are horse stalls. Light from the afternoon sun reflects across her eyes. She holds the geography book in front of her face to shield her face as she tries to make herself small.

A young man advances on her. He is only seen from the waist down. A large silver buckle, the first place award in a show jumping contest, flashes at his waist, reflecting the light.

There is a sudden blur of motion as he grabs the book and throws it on the floor of the barn. The front cover flaps open. Drewanna's name is scrawled on the end paper.

He lunges at the cringing girl and pushes her full length on the seat of the truck's cab. Drewanna's slender brown legs protruding from the truck door. The unseen man's overall covered legs are between hers. The truck rocks with the motion of his rape.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREET. -- MOMENTS LATER

Andrea pounds her steering wheel and shakes her head as she SCREAMS.

A man knocks at the driver's window.

MAN

Lady! Lady! Roll down your window.

Startled, Andrea stops screaming. She sits up with a start and gives the man a bewildered look. Dazed, she rolls down her window.

ANDREA

Why isn't traffic moving?

MAN

Lady, why'd you hit your brakes?

It dawns on her what has happened. Andrea shakes her head and begins crying.

INT. ANDREA'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

Andrea and Karen sit in Andrea's living room. A coffee service is on the table, both women have kicked off their shoes. Andrea is freshly showered with hair in towel.

ANDREA

That was some show I gave. Next step.. Broadway.

KAREN

Harrison and I will pick up your car later. Here. Take one.
(holds out pill bottle)

ANDREA

That's right, tranq the loony up.

KAREN

If you can relax, maybe you can remember some of the details. Maybe it was a bad reaction to the test.

ANDREA

I still feel so dirty. It was just like before.

Karen leans forward and pours fresh coffee into both cups. She pauses in reaction.

KAREN

Before? You never told me this has happened before. For real, I mean?

ANDREA

I don't know anymore. My car...when it stalled in Station Hill... Zach...he...I...
(hands tremble)

Karen moves to sit next to her. Takes the cup from Andrea's hand.

KAREN

Go on.

ANDREA

I can't talk about it.

KAREN

Did he hurt you? Does Feldstein know?

ANDREA

No. No. It's not like that. I refuse to end up like Aunt Sophie. She used to scream that she was being raped by a white man. It was strange.

INT. ANDREA'S APARTMENT -- LATER THAT NIGHT.

Andrea sits propped up in bed unable to sleep. Two books are open as well as the newspaper. "Nick At Night" is in reruns.

The phone RINGS. Andrea answers.

ZACH

Hi, sweetheart. Thought you were going to give me a call?

ANDREA

They decided to amputate at the neck.

ZACH

I'm fond of that neck. Can they send me the head, at least?

Andrea stands and begins to pace with the phone in her hands.

ANDREA

Doubt it. Got smashed up in the process.

ZACH

Andi..

ANDREA

I see Feldstein on Thursday.

ZACH

You want me there?

ANDREA

I have to handle this in my own way.

ZACH

What aren't you telling me?

Andrea doesn't reply. She tucks the phone under her chin and nervously begins picking up pieces of newspaper from where they had fallen alongside the bed.

ANDREA

Everything's fine.

ZACH

So you're coming down next week?

ANDREA

Maybe.

INT. HENLEY AND HARRISON OFFICE. NEXT DAY.

Andrea works furiously at her drafting table. Karen watches her from the doorway for a moment.

KAREN

You're pushing too hard.

ANDREA

I have to get this done. Our meeting's on Wednesday.

KAREN

It's only Friday.

ANDREA

Headstart kids. We're camping out this weekend.

Andrea looks up from her work. Karen picks up paperweight of a Southern mansion.

KAREN

Think you should?