

PLAYBACK

By

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FADE IN:

1 **EXT. BEACH - DAYBREAK** 1

Waves CRASH onto the surf. JONATHAN PARKER (mid 40s) is thrown onto the sand, water lapping his face. He stirs.

Deserted. Not a living soul in sight, human or other. Fog rolls off the water, shrouding whatever's beyond. He is truly alone.

JONATHAN

Hello?

Silence.

2 **EXT. CRASHING SURF - SOON LATER** 2

SHIPWRECK DEBRIS floats at the edge. Jonathan wades through the water, collecting junk as he goes - the remaining part of the HULL, ROPE, a BUNDLE OF BANANAS.

3 **EXT. TREELINE - AFTERNOON** 3

The sun sits high, its light cutting through the trees. Jonathan secures the frame of his shelter with rope. He heaves a bundle of leaves on top for the roof. Sweat drips down his face.

4 **INT. SHELTER - NIGHT** 4

Jonathan tends to a small fire. The firelight flickers across his face. He peels and takes a bite from one of his precious bananas.

FADE TO BLACK.

5 **EXT. CRASHING SURF/BEACH - MORNING** 5

Jonathan heaves a large METAL BOX out of the water and onto shore. He picks up a rock and smashes it into the padlock.

CAMERA'S POV FROM THE TREELINE

Jonathan continues beating the lock.

BACK WITH JONATHAN - one final smash - the lock busts. He dumps out its contents.

Water spills out along with soggy first aid supplies. He shakes it empty. A FLARE GUN falls out, soaked.

A CRASH from the treeline. Jonathan spins around.

CAMERA's POV FROM THE TREELINE

Jonathan peers, searching for the cause of the crash. The CAMERA's POV ducks down - hiding from Jonathan's sight.

BACK WITH JONATHAN - he sticks the flare gun in his waistband and ventures past the treeline, into unknown territory.

6 **EXT. BEACH COTTAGE - LATER**

6

A tiny wooden shack tucked in the forest. Rain barrels sit against the north side. An overgrown pathway leads to the sandy beach in front.

Jonathan approaches from behind. He spots the cottage and picks up a sprint toward it.

He raps on the front door.

JONATHAN

Hello? Anyone there? I'm not there
to hurt you.

(pause)

Please? I need help.

He tests the knob. It turns. He steps inside.

7 **INT. BEACH COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS**

7

The main room is in complete disarray. It looks like a hurricane came through - the couch overturned and kitchenware scattered across the floor. He crosses to the other door, careful where he steps.

He pushes on the door - stuck. He pushes with more force. It doesn't budge. He shoves it with his shoulder. It moves the slightest.

8 **INT. COTTAGE BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

8

The door budes, slowly. The opening's big enough for him to just barely slip through.

The bed had been pushed against the door - a barricade. What happened here?

A RADIO SET sits on a desk under an open window, its curtains billowing. Jonathan rushes over and fumbles with the radio's knobs and buttons. Static.

9 **INT. BEACH COTTAGE - LATER**

9

Jonathan rifles through the cabinets. He finds a box of crackers - pulls one out - eats it. Then...

GLASS SHATTERS as BULLETS PIERCE the window above the sink. Jonathan ducks down and shuffles behind the couch for cover.

FOOTSTEPS on the porch outside the front door. The door CREAKS as it opens.

CAMERA'S POV ON THE PORCH

The CAMERA'S POV slowly moves around the door frame to glance inside. Jonathan raises the flare gun above the couch frame. The CAMERA'S POV rears back out of the doorway.

BACK WITH JONATHAN

Jonathan blindly fires the flare gun at the door. It doesn't shoot - ruined from the water. He sneaks into the bedroom as the MAN (mid 40s) steps into the doorway, face hidden.

10 **INT. COTTAGE BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS**

10

Glass CRUNCHES under footsteps outside the room. Jonathan's starting to panic, eyes darting, looking for a way out. He spots the window and pulls himself through.

11 **EXT. BEACH COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS**

11

Mud SPLASHES under his feet as he lands. The footsteps halt inside the bedroom, listening.

Jonathan creeps backward. His foot catches and he falls. He looks down to see what tripped him. The lifeless eyes of a WOMAN (early 40s) peer up at him. He covers his mouth to keep himself from screaming.

Her skin is wilted and pruny, hair wet. Face swollen and unrecognizable. Drowned. She's been dead a while.

Jonathan scrambles to his feet. He peeks around the corner of the house, checking to see if the coast is clear.

In the rain barrel's reflection, a MAN stalks up behind Jonathan.

He takes Jonathan by surprise, shoving his head into the rain barrel. Jonathan thrashes but he's no match for his attacker. Jonathan SCREAMS under the water. He can't breathe. He falls unconscious and...

12 **EXT. BEACH - DAYBREAK**

12

Waves CRASH onto the surf. Jonathan is thrown onto the sand, water lapping his face. He stirs.

Camera pulls back until...

13 **INT. LAB**

13

White walls. Bright florescent lights. Sterilized. A large television is on - debris floating in the water, Jonathan wading through collecting spare wood and a bundle of bananas.

APPLAUSE in the room.

The DOCTOR, a short man, enters the lab.

DOCTOR
(aggravated)
Why are you all clapping?

LAB TECHNICIAN (O.S)
Sir, we got it, didn't we?

The LAB TECHNICIAN (late 20s) stares at his superior for an answer.

DOCTOR
I didn't see anything. Did you?

The Lab Technician points a remote at the television. The video rewinds and pauses on the rain barrel.

LAB TECHNICIAN
There, in the water. We have a face.

DOCTOR
More like a shadow. It's not enough. Run it again.

LAB TECHNICIAN
We've reached our maximum today.

DOCTOR

Does it look like I'm asking? A murky reflection won't stand a chance in a trial. Run it again.

LAB TECHNICIAN

But sir, the law-

DOCTOR

-Doesn't apply to criminals like him.

Cords run from the television to the back of a chair where he sits - Jonathan Parker, in prison orange. He's strapped to the chair, fitted into a headset, lights blinking rapidly along the band.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

You don't want to be the one responsible for letting a murderer walk do you? I didn't think so.

The Doctor marches into the viewing room.

14

INT. VIEWING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

14

The Doctor takes a seat at a desk and begins signing forms. DETECTIVE HUMMEL (50s) turns away from the viewing window and takes a seat across the Doctor. *

DETECTIVE HUMMEL

So this is what you lab rats do all day? Pick through people's minds?

DOCTOR

When there's no witnesses it's necessary in order to move forward with a conviction.

DETECTIVE HUMMEL

Impressive. Let them convict themselves.

(pause)

Your technician's pretty sure he saw a face.

DOCTOR

Maybe he did. But whatever he saw won't hold up in trial, that's for sure. And we need a conviction.

DETECTIVE

Do you think he did it?

DOCTOR

Pretty damn obvious, isn't it? It's
a wonder that trash like him make
it through high school much less
the second grade.

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DETECTIVE

Harvard.

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DOCTOR

Excuse me?

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DETECTIVE

He was a Harvard graduate. Top of
his class. Had a good job. And he
loved her. Curious that he'd throw
it all away like this, don't ya
think?

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DOCTOR

Either way, reflection hasn't shown
up before. This is the closest
we've been to identifying Emily
Parker's killer. When that
reflection comes clear he's gonna
get what's coming to him and you
can sure bet it's something he
deserves.

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Detective Hummel gets up and moves to the viewing window. He
stares through the one-way glass at Jonathan. On the
television, Jonathan fires the flare gun. It doesn't shoot -
ruined from the water.

SLOW PUSH toward Jonathan, mindless. Stop on his eyes,
glassy.

FADE OUT.