

DEFENSELESS

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. MORGANVILLE APARTMENTS - MORNING

An orange cat strolls through the parking lot of this two story building. It's startled by apartment manager LEON WATKINS (43), bitterness burned on his unshaven face, as he drags a garbage can toward a dumpster.

As Leon empties the can he sees the cat, glares at it in a devious, calculating way.

Across the lot a grey cat watches through an apartment window as Leon, feigning sweetness, lures the orange cat over.

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The grey cat hisses as he watches Leon toss the cat into the dumpster then walk away with a sick, gratified smile.

KRISTEN (O.S.)

What's the matter Newman?
Squirrels teasing you again?

KRISTEN VOSS (22), cute cheerful type in fashionable business attire and perfect french manicure, picks up Newman and calms him. She checks outside the window, sees nothing.

EXT. MORGANVILLE APARTMENTS - MOMENTS LATER

Garbage bag in tow, Kristen heads to the dumpster, tosses it in. A faint "MEOW" comes from inside.

She looks in, grimaces at the smell and mound of bags and loose garbage. Another "MEOW".

With urgency she pulls the bags out one by one but can't reach the ones on the bottom.

Concern prevails over disgust. She lifts her leg over the edge then carefully lowers herself into the dumpster.

LEON (O.S.)

Anything I can help you with?

Startled, Kristen looks up to see Leon's cheeky smile.

KRISTEN

I heard a cat in here.

LEON

Really now? Ain't that somethin'.

She continues, attempting to ignore his presence.

As she pulls out another bag he reaches over to take it from her. Reluctantly she accepts his help. They unload more bags until she sees the orange cat, wet with blood on it's face.

KRISTEN

I know this cat. He's a stray. I feed him sometimes.

Carefully she picks him up. He's hurt and a bit out of it.

LEON

Poor little guy. I hate to see him suffer. I'll call animal control.

KRISTEN

No! They'll just put him down. I'll take him to my vet.

Leon watches in amusement as she attempts to climb out of the dumpster with the cat in her arms. She looks at Leon's smug face. He holds his arms out, warily she hands the cat over.

The cat hisses at Leon, bites him on the arm, draws blood.

LEON

Son of a bitch!

Leon throws the cat down and it darts into the woods.

KRISTEN

Shit!

Panicked, she tries to get out. Again she needs his help, he accommodates looking very pleased with her discomfort.

KRISTEN

I've gotta find him. Thanks.

LEON

You shouldn't go into the woods alone. I'll help.

This makes her uneasy as she heads into the

WOODS

Leon follows closely behind. She walks quickly as if trying to lose him. She makes a kissing noise then calls out.

KRISTEN

Here kitty, kitty, kitty.

Leon heads to the right, she's relieved to be rid of him. She glances back toward the direction they came. They're pretty far away, she can't even see the apartment building.

LEON (O.S.)

Hey! I see him!

Kristen runs over. Leon stands in front of an old brick shed buried halfway into a small hill, door partly open.

LEON

He ran inside.

He enters. Kristen hesitates then cautiously follows.

INT. SHED - MORNING

Dusty shelves scattered with cobweb covered rusted cans and other items line the walls.

KRISTEN

I think...I'm going back outside.

Leon ignores her, walks to the back, disappears into the shadows. A "MEOW" makes Kristen jump. She strains to see.

KRISTEN

Did you find him?

Leon steps forward, cat in his arms. Suddenly her distrust melts away and she approaches him in a friendly way.

KRISTEN

I can't believe you found him.

As she reaches out to pet the cat Leon takes a step back.

With a depraved smile he looks down at a hole in the floor. Steps lead down to a root cellar. He drops the cat in.

Kristen gasps, hesitates a moment then turns to run.

Leon grabs her, she struggles but he overpowers her. She screams. He sees a filthy rag, stuffs it in her mouth.

Arms behind her back he drags her through the room.

He finds a roll of wire, binds her wrists then twists the ends of the wire together. He wraps wire around her ankles then her mouth to secure the rag.

He pulls her close. Terrified she cries as his lips press to her ear.

He slowly runs his free hand from her face, down her neck, over her breast down near her crotch.

LEON

Mmmm. Here kitty, kitty, kitty.

She screams but with the rag it's muffled. He laughs as he drags her to the hole. Her eyes plead.

LEON

You're going in one way or another.

She struggles, he pushes her in.

She rolls down the steps and lands on the dirty floor. He looks down at her.

LEON

Be back later. . .my pet.

He laughs and walks away.

INT. ROOT CELLAR - MOMENTS LATER

From the opening over the steps a shaft of light shines down on Kristen who lay in a heap on the floor. Tears leave muddy streaks down her face.

She sits up, squints as she adjust her eyes to the low light.

It's a small, empty space. She sees the cat over in a corner and scoots over to it, billowing dust all around.

Unable to touch it or say anything she looks helplessly at the animal. Hurt and stunned the cat doesn't move.

She twists her hands aggressively to wriggle them free. It doesn't work and leaves her wrists red and bloody.

She attempts to stand but with her ankles bound she just falls over.

As she lay there she tries to free her hands again. Blood trickles down to her French manicure, now filthy.

With her fingertips she feels the side of her index finger nail which has broken off into a very sharp point.

Suddenly she sits up. Realization washes over her face.

INT. ROOT CELLAR - LATER

Barely any light comes through the opening above the steps.

In the corner the cat, still weak, licks a paw then cleans the blood off his ear.

With a look of determination, Kristen fiercely moves her hands, scraping them against the wall.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Branches and leaves crunch under foot.

A flashlight guides Leon as he approaches the shed.

INT. ROOT CELLAR - NIGHT

Complete darkness.

Footsteps come from above, followed by flickers of light.

From somewhere in the cellar, Kristen lets out a muffled, throaty scream.

The light shines down the hole as Leon walks down. Kristen squints as the beam hits her eyes.

When she sees that it's Leon, her body becomes rigid. She sits up, glares at him as not to be intimidated.

LEON

How are you my pet?

He scans every corner of the room with the flashlight, surprised to see no cat. Kristen is surprised as well.

LEON

Guess your friend wasn't that hurt.
Maybe he went to get help.

He laughs, walks closer and shines the light on her face.

She can't help but cringe as he moves some hair from in front of her eyes then runs his hand down her cheek.

He puts the flashlight down so it shines up to the ceiling then undoes the wire from around her head.

She spits out the dirty rag then coughs uncontrollably.

Leon pulls a bottle of water from his jacket pocket. He pours some in her mouth.

He laughs as she desperately swallows as much as she can.

LEON

See, I'm not such a bad guy. I even brought duct tape cus that wire's gotta be hurtin' you.

He shines the flashlight on her bloody wrists. She looks at him with contempt. He loves it.

LEON

I'll leave it be if you want me to. It's up to you.

She tries to speak, has to clear her throat. She speaks in a soft, calm tone.

KRISTEN

Could you. . .please. . .remove the wire. It is painful.

LEON

I surely can.

He puts the flashlight down again and moves behind her. Her hands are clenched in tight fists as he removes the wire.

Once released, her fists remain clenched as she brings her arms forward and shakes them out.

Leon kneels down in front of her. She flinches as he reaches out and gently rubs her shoulders and arms.

LEON

I'm not that bad a guy.

Slowly he leans in to kiss her. She unclenches her fists revealing her nails now all sharpened to points.

She quickly raises her right hand to his throat, squeezing so hard she pierces his skin. At the same time she shoves the claw on her left thumb deep into his eye.

Leon screams in agony, struggles from her grip and falls backward.

She reaches over, grabs the flashlight and bashes him over the head with it several times until he goes unconscious.

Quickly, she undoes the wire on her ankles, grabs the flashlight and runs up the steps.

EXT. MORGANVILLE APARTMENTS - MORNING

Garbage bag in tow, Kristen heads to the dumpster, tosses it in.

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Across the lot, Newman watches her from their apartment window, the orange cat seated next to him.

FADE OUT.