

SEEING RED

a supernatural romantic thriller screenplay by

Sundae Jahant-Osborn

Blackheath Park, Flat 1
London, England SE3 9SJ
mob (011) 44 (0) 7887486894

wysiwygprod@compuserve.com

FADE IN

Darkness. The rough but almost melancholic voice of a STRANGER echoes, bleeding with misery.

STRANGER (V.O.)

For this food I am about to receive, I am no longer grateful. I don't want to do this any more. Somebody please stop me. Amen.

EXT - RESTAURANT TERRACE - SUNSET

A chic restaurant. EDWARD, distinguished, early 50s, suave in expensive designer sunglasses, is romancing a companion who giggles as he pours her another glass of cabernet. She is a beautiful red-head, well kept for her early 50s.

EDWARD

To my beautiful wife... and to a lovely dinner.

She smiles, relishing the unusual attention.

WIFE

Edward, what's gotten into you? Are you dying or something?

Edward oozes confidence.

EDWARD

Is it wrong to savor the attention of the most beautiful woman in the room?

She blushes.

WIFE

This just, so isn't you...

EDWARD

A man can change can't he?

She leans forward, flirtatiously.

WIFE

Well whatever this is, I'm loving it.

She admires the minimalist white decor and dotted red roses.

WIFE

Very romantic spot.

EDWARD

I picked it with you in mind.

She slides a hand under the table and up his leg.

WIFE
And sexy new shades. Very "Jack
Nicholson."

Her lips curl into a smile.

WIFE (CONT'D)
You're not fooling around on me are you?

EDWARD
(laughing)
What kind of animal do you think I am?

Edward relaxes, and looks into her eyes.

EDWARD (CONT'D)
I swear... all I want is you.

She leans in closer, clearly moved.

WIFE
You're freaking me out. But don't stop.

He caresses her glossy red hair and runs his finger over her lips.
She nearly melts.

WIFE
Hold that thought. I'll be right back.

She blows him a sultry kiss, grabs her handbag and pops away to
the ladies room.

As she disappears down the hall, he watches her lustfully. He
looks around, then grabs his glass of wine and discreetly follows
her down the hall, closing the bathroom door and locking it behind
him. A master of seduction.

INT. RESTAURANT BATHROOM - MINUTES LATER

Shocked, but excited, she smiles at him lustily as he removes his
dark shades. Unusual crystal-blue eyes flash back at her.

She hesitates, confused. These are eyes she doesn't recognise.

Suddenly a look of sheer horror sweeps her face, and there's a
loud SCREAM of terror as blood sprays violently across the sleek
white walls. Window glass CRASHES as the husband escapes.

CUT TO:

INT. SAME BLOOD SPLATTERED BATHROOM - LATER

Cops come in and out of the bathroom, past the psychedelic
carnival of manic reporters, onlookers and yellow tape. As CSIs
comb the horrific scene, the uncomfortably deep voice of the
STRANGER, somber, troubled, speaks again.

STRANGER (V.O.)

This one, too, will of course never be solved. It's the perfect crime. I should know, I've committed a lot of them. Too many, really. But I get no pleasure from it. Just a sick, cursed, lingering need for more...

The voice fades as a plain clothes Detective enters, shaking her head at the magnitude of gore.

DETECTIVE CAT HOPE, black, late 30s, tough, professional, but with a life-long cop's cynical smirk. She is good-looking but harsh, her hair hidden under an LAPD baseball cap. A fellow cop, BROOKS, middle-aged with a lazy waistline, greets her at the door.

HOPE

Damn. This is messier than my divorce.

BROOKS

This guy didn't just kill her, he practically devoured her.

HOPE

Another red-head, same M.O. as the others?

Brooks nods, still scanning the room.

BROOKS

Yeah, but this time there are witnesses who saw the husband go in.

HOPE

(surprised)

The husband was here?

(pause)

Well, that's new. You sent someone to try and pick him up?

Brooks nods.

BROOKS

Can't be him though, right?

She shakes her head.

HOPE

Doubt it. Unless he killed the others to make it look like a serial killer, and deflect attention away from a plan to murder his wife.

BROOKS

Right. Like the DC sniper tried to.

She stares down at the carnage, looking into the glassy lifeless eyes of the corpse, then focusing on the red hair.

HOPE

But this looks a little too... enthusiastic
for such a clinical plan.

(she looks away)

Find anything else?

BROOKS

Yeah.

Brooks holds up a small, transparent evidence bag - inside is a motel room key with the number 201 etched on it.

BROOKS

Anyone could have left it here, but you
never know.

HOPE

Which motel?

BROOKS

Doesn't say.

HOPE

Damn.

BROOKS

Even if it is the killer's, you think he'd
go back there after this?

HOPE

Who knows what a monster like this would be
doing right now...

CUT TO:

INT. SEEDY WINE BAR - NIGHT

Dark, sparse. A dated tune quietly strums in the background.

A glass of red wine is raised, sipped delicately, then lowered.

LYALL, a young male in his 20's, rough, lean, but oddly attractive in a "Criss Angel" sort of way, sits drinking at the bar, wearing a faded denim jacket and dark, wrap-around shades.

He leans over his glass of wine, staring at a silent TV flashing the latest news along the bottom of the screen - "Manhunt on for husband suspected of savaging wife in latest spree of red-headed killings in LA area".

As Lyall reads and drinks, zoning, the Stranger's voice returns.

STRANGER (V.O.)

It wasn't the husband. It wasn't even
human.

A DRUNK downing a cheap beer nearby nearly chokes on a handful of peanuts as he rants to the lady BARTENDER and points at the TV.

DRUNK

Ain't no man if you ask me. More like some kind of god-damn werewolf! Get out the silver bullets!

The drunk laughs to himself. Lyall just stares back at him blankly.

STRANGER (V.O.)

The bullets don't have to be silver, they just need to pierce the heart. Silver actually causes less damage. It's a fact, look it up.

Lyall finishes off his wine. The Stranger's voice intensifies.

STRANGER (V.O.)

I'm somewhat of an authority on werewolves. They exist, whether you want to believe or not. People glorify them on full moons, dress up like them on Halloween. Then there's those goddamn twi-hards. But nobody really believes. Nobody thinks they need to.

Lyall pays the bartender, who provocatively stuffs the bills down her shirt. He looks at her, unfazed, then gets up and walks away. As he steps toward the door, he slides his shades back onto his tousled head, revealing the same unmistakable crystal blue eyes as Edward, the husband. He looks directly at his confidants. Us.

LYALL (THE STRANGER) (V.O.)

Unless of course, the werewolf is you.

EXT - BUSY LOS ANGELES STREET - DUSK (CON'T)

Lyall aimlessly walks a city street, enviously watching normal people as they brush past him, oblivious. Ladies shop, couples hold hands, friends laugh and share food.

He lights a cigarette as he walks.

LYALL (V.O.)

Despite what you might think, being a werewolf blows....*I wish* I were normal.

He exhales smoke into the night sky. A MAN IN A DESIGNER SUIT approaches him.

MAN IN SUIT

Got a light?

Lyall smiles, lights his cigarette, and the man flashes back a thank you as he walks off. As he does, Lyall shrewdly pockets the man's thick wallet.

LYALL (V.O.)

I gotta make a living somehow.

He takes another long drag.

LYALL (V.O.)

I don't know if there are even any others like me left. I'm a lone wolf, no pun intended, in a world full of people who will never understand how lonely I am.

(pause)

I've lived so long that I can't even remember everything I've done, everyone I've killed, or who I am anymore. Or if I could ever be anything different.

Lyall becomes distracted by a beautiful red-headed DELIVERY GIRL. As she walks past carrying a pizza, Lyall subtly licks his lips.

LYALL (V.O.)

Lucky for her, I'm full.

Lyall eyes her a moment, then looks away. He leans back against a wall and lights another cigarette off his previous one, chain-smoking. A long drag as he stares up at the bright full moon.

LYALL (V.O.)

I always wait as long as I can between feeds. The guilt, for me, is a powerful deterrent. But the week of the full moon, it's tough.

The girl back at him briefly, drawn to him. But she keeps walking.

LYALL (V.O.)

And red-heads... They are my weakness. Especially beautiful ones. I'm not exactly sure why. Maybe because they taste the sweetest.

A last deep drag and he stamps out his cigarette with a boot. He is caught off guard as a cute little red-headed child, EMMA, runs toward him, chasing a balloon.

On impulse he reaches out, and snatches... her balloon. He hands the string back to her and pats her sweetly on the head. Her GRANDFATHER catches up, worried and out of breath.

GRANDFATHER

Emma, you can't run off on papa like that!

(to LYALL)

Thank you for the balloon.

LYALL

No problem.

Lyall crouches to Emma's height.

LYALL (CONT'D)

You listen to your papa. It's very dangerous to run off on your own.

Emma looks back at him carefully. She nods, staring.

EMMA

I like your big blue eyes.

LYALL

All the better to see you with, my dear.

Lyall and Emma exchange a smile.

The Grandfather takes her hand, nods at Lyall curiously, and walks away. Emma giggles happily at the balloon as Lyall looks on.

LYALL (V.O.)

I'm a monster, but I'm not a MONSTER. I could never kill a child. I'd give anything to have that kind of hope and enthusiasm for life again.

Lyall gazes up at the sky.

LYALL (V.O.)

To find my own lost balloon.

Lyall sighs and rubs his weary eyes. As the girl and her Grandfather round a corner, Lyall turns and wanders away.

EXT. RICH HOLLYWOOD HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Several police squad cars pull up in front of a large mansion, their flashing lights illuminate the street.

Lyall watches discreetly from across the road as the cops slowly approach the mansion, weapons drawn.

As the officers pound on the front door, Edward answers, half asleep in silk pajamas. He's dumbfounded by the officers pointing guns at him.

LYALL (V.O.)

Covering my ass usually involves morphing, which tends to be quite a headache for my unfortunate scapegoats.

Cops grab and handcuff Edward, who screams and shouts.

EDWARD

But I've been home all night! What restaurant? My wife went out with friends!... She's what? Oh my God! No! This isn't happening...

A curious ONLOOKER in a bathrobe walks up to Lyall, who is watching the arrest calmly in his dark wrap-arounds.

ONLOOKER

What's going on?

LYALL
 (matter-of-fact)
 Some nutter killed his wife.

ONLOOKER
 How?

Lyall just hunches his shoulders as he watches the cops drag Edward to the car. The onlooker just nods casually, and walks over for a closer view.

LYALL (V.O.)
 Don't worry, he'll be fine. I checked his schedule earlier - poker night at home, plenty of witnesses. I always make sure they have a solid alibi when using their identity. Reasonable doubt and a good lawyer can work wonders. I may be a killer but that's not my choice, it's just my nature. Locking people up - that's against nature.

The cops shove Edward into the back of the police car, kicking and screaming. He starts to cry. Lyall sighs quietly to himself.

EDWARD (O.S.)
 Oh God! Not my wife...

LYALL (V.O.)
 I'm so sorry, I really wish I could stop...

Head lowered, he skulks into the darkness.

INT. RED'S MODEST YUPPIE APARTMENT - EARLY EVENING

SUPER: ONE MONTH LATER

RED - young, fair and beautiful, in her early 20s with long silky red hair - sits at a table in a new apartment, unopened boxes stacked around her. She carefully applies rouge lipstick in front of a handheld mirror - she is truly striking.

AMY, about 30, plain, short dark hair and bohemian eyeglasses, watches her in awe.

RED
 Thanks for coming over tonight. Don't really know many people here yet. Can get a bit lonely on your own.

AMY
 LA can be a tough town. But I could tell you'd fit in from the day you started.

Amy leans back in her chair.

AMY (CONT'D)

Working in the projects takes guts. I certainly wouldn't trust just anyone down there.

RED

Not guts, just patience. And pepper spray.

They giggle in agreement. Amy studies her.

AMY

I've never seen you with your hair down. You look more like... a model than a Social Worker. You should try applying to some agencies.

RED

What, are you trying to get rid of me?!

Laughs.

AMY

(seriously)

Not at all!

RED

I like what I do. Giving these old people a purpose again. But I admit, it can be draining... I definitely need a night out!

A devilish grin sweeps Red's face as she hands Amy the lipstick and mirror.

RED

Let's get out on the prowl! Go clubbing!

AMY

Yes, lets!

Amy takes the bait, and the lipstick. She starts to apply it, then distractedly watches Red in the mirror as she applies moisturizer to her long, beautiful legs.

AMY

So, no boyfriend then? Back in Wisconsin?

RED

Are you imagining some freckled hay-seed with a tractor and overalls?

Amy laughs.

RED

(gazing off)

No, too picky. Even in America's Dairyland, the lookers are usually scumbags.

AMY

Yeah, I've met my share.

RED
(snaps back to present)
Nothing for me back there except an
adoringly over-protective mother.

She points Amy to a photo of a picture-perfect mother, framed on a shelf next to them. Amy looks over.

AMY
Now I see where you get your looks.

RED
Actually, I'm adopted.

AMY
Wow. I'm learning a lot this evening!

Red turns to her mischievously.

RED
Wait until we get to the club!

Amy laughs and gazes at her for a bit too long. Red doesn't notice. Amy keeps watching and her face grows apprehensive as Red brushes her long, red hair.

AMY
You think it's safe out there? You know,
with all these red-heads being killed?

RED
Now you sound like my mother!

Awkward laughs.

AMY
I'm serious.

Red pauses and raises her eyebrows at Amy persuasively.

RED
When you look at me, do you think,
'victim'?

Amy hesitates.

AMY
Well, no, I mean..I can tell you can look
after yourself but... well, do you own a
hat?

RED
No self-respecting slimebag is gonna buy
drinks for a chick in a hat!

Amy lets it go, and giggles.

RED

Come on, we'll go someplace crowded and stay together.

(beat)

Besides, I kick ass at martial arts!

Red mimics a karate stance and Amy relents with a laugh. Then Red takes her by the arm and leads her to the door, grabbing a shiny red leather jacket on her way out.

INT. POLICE STATION - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Detective Hope, now in civilian clothes, is also applying red lipstick in the mirror. She pouts, inspects herself and, as an after-thought, removes the baseball cap, revealing a short afro.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Hope walks down the corridor of the nearly empty police station, past Brooks's desk. He notices that she's dressed up for a night out.

BROOKS

Wow. You busting a pimp ring tonight?

HOPE

Why, you want me to pass a message on to your mom?

They both laugh good-naturedly.

VOICE (O.S.)

Detective Hope!

She sighs, turns. Standing in his office doorway is CAPTAIN MUNRO, forties, slick.

HOPE

Yes, Herr Commandant?

MUNRO

In here.

INT. POLICE STATION - MUNRO'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Hope walks in.

HOPE

If it's about the extra overtime I deserve every damn -

She stops in her tracks as she notices another man; late forties, blonde, good-looking but gaunt, sitting on a seat in front of the desk. SORENSEN stands, smiling.