

CIRCUMSTANTIAL

Written by

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Short Film

*Part **one** of the "In His Hands" Anthology*

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CIRCUMSTANTIAL

INT. APARTMENT - FRONT ENTRANCE - DAY

Moving boxes in hand, AUDRA enters her new shared apartment. Her radiance illuminates the space.

INT. APARTMENT - AUDRA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Audra places the boxes down on the floor of her stripped back bedroom. She absorbs the promise for potential.

She spins on her feet to retrieve more belongings.

INT. APARTMENT - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Audra collides into a broody BRADY. He catches her wrists in his hands. Sharing an obscure moment.

AUDRA

Oh, sorry.

Release. Step back.

AUDRA (CONT'D)

Hi, I'm Audra, you must be Brady.

She extends her hand to shake his.

BRADY

You're the new roommate?

Audra nods her head enthusiastically.

AUDRA

Justin and I met up for coffee for the screening. Accepted me on the spot. I'm so grateful.

BRADY

Yeah he likes to do all that stuff. I prefer to keep to myself.

Brady slinks off to his room and closes the door.

AUDRA

Oh, okay. It was nice to meet you.

INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

In corporate attire, Audra enters the kitchen. Phone pressed against her ear, laptop bag swinging from her shoulder. She unpacks fruit into a bowl while talking to her sister.

AUDRA

I'm just saying, you don't have to lock yourself down with him yet. You've got plenty of time to figure out what you want. Enjoy the freedom while you can sis.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

In her pyjamas, Audra flicks through streaming services looking for something to watch. She's distracted by a muffled fight over the phone coming from Brady's room.

Brady launches out of his room and storms passed, not acknowledging Audra's existence. He grabs a beer from the fridge and skulks back into his room. She offers him a soft smile and picks up her phone.

AUDRA

Hey Brady, come check this out.

Brady reemerges and amuses her, mirthlessly.

BRADY

What's up?

AUDRA

Have you seen this? It looks like some kind of virus. We have to lock down or something.

Brady checks his phone.

AUDRA (CONT'D)

Oh my God. I have to work from home until further notice. Do you?

BRADY

I doubt it. Looks like I fall into the essential worker category. Great.

A usually chipper JUSTIN enters, distressed.

AUDRA

Justin, did you see the news?

JUSTIN

Yeah. The Airline have laid off 400 staff. I'm one of them.

BRADY

That sucks man. What are you going to do?

JUSTIN

Well, the only reason I moved here is for this job. I might as well head back home. Do you think you two will be okay to cover the rent until you get a new roommate?

Audra looks at Brady for an answer. He shrugs.

BRADY

You've got to do what's best for you dude.

INT. APARTMENT - AUDRA'S BEDROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Audra wraps up a Zoom call.

AUDRA

Bye guys!

She shuts her laptop and looks around the silent room. Mostly tired, kind of sad, very lonely.

INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Looking over the fruit bowl, she bypasses a banana and goes for the chocolate cookies.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

She wanders into the low-lit living room where Brady is watching a sport rerun.

AUDRA

Oh is there a game on?

BRADY

No, it's a rerun.

AUDRA

Ah yes, of course. Do you mind if I watch with you?

He moves a cushion making space for her. She sits.

AUDRA (CONT'D)

Do you miss it?

BRADY

More than I thought I would.

AUDRA

Me too. I'm missing things I didn't think I'd ever miss. Like morning coffee with my team, or listening to music on a drive or... I know it sounds weird, but you know when you walk by a restaurant on a night out and you're blanketed by an intoxicating mix of perfumes and colognes? I miss that.

He's intrigued by her.

AUDRA (CONT'D)

What do you miss?

BRADY

Mostly this. And the gym.

She bites a cookie and a crumb falls on her lap. He leans over and dusts it off her. She's enjoying his softness.

INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MORNING

In a corporate top and pyjama pants, Audra wanders into the kitchen. Brady is at the bench in his uniform. He has two coffees in hand. He hands her one.

AUDRA

What's this?

BRADY

It's not coffee with your team but I figured while I'm making one...

Audra melts. They drink quietly at the kitchen table.

INT. APARTMENT - AUDRA'S BEDROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Audra is working on her laptop. Brady knocks on her slightly ajar door. He waves a bag of chocolate in the air.

BRADY

This is a good game, you don't want to miss it.

Excited, Audra shuts her laptop.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

She's sitting forward, captivated by the rerun.

AUDRA

It sucks that you know how it ends.

BRADY

It's kind of cool watching you see it for the first time. Beer?

AUDRA

Sure.

While he's in the kitchen, the team is about to score.

AUDRA (CONT'D)

Quick you're going to miss it!

He runs back in the room as they score. She jumps off the lounge squealing and they excitedly embrace - his hands around her wrist once more.

**BEGIN MONTAGE SEQUENCE:**

**KITCHEN:** Audra is baking. Brady cuddles her from behind. He dunks his finger in the mix and she turns to stop him but he quickly eats it. They share a messy batter kiss.

**LIVING ROOM:** They're doing yoga and he's struggling. He falls out of a pose and pulls her down into arms.

**KITCHEN:** She has their morning coffee ready at the kitchen table. He comes out in his uniform and joins her.

**BEDROOM:** Fresh out of the shower, he walks by her room in a towel. She smirks, puts her book down and follows him.

**END OF MONTAGE SEQUENCE.**

INT. APARTMENT - BRADY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Laying in bed, they take each other in lovingly. Her phone lights up. She checks it. He reads over her shoulder.

BRADY  
Who's Daniel?

AUDRA  
A guy from work. We're on this awful project together.

BRADY  
You haven't mentioned him before.

AUDRA  
It's a new project. We haven't worked together before.

BRADY  
But he's comfortable enough to be messaging you at night?

AUDRA  
Yeah because an early morning meeting has been moved. It's only work, see? He's just a colleague.

Brady stands, angry.

BRADY  
Don't give me this colleague bullshit. Does he know about me?

AUDRA  
Brady, what is going on with you? Has something happened?

BRADY  
Does he?

AUDRA  
Well, no, it's not exactly an item we put on our meeting agenda.

BRADY  
Don't patronize me Audra.

AUDRA  
I'm not, this is crazy. Where is this coming from?

BRADY  
No one knows about us. We just exist within these four walls.

AUDRA  
No, my sister knows about you.

BRADY

What about me? What do you tell her? All these secrets, I can't do it!

He storms out leaving her in a puddle of shock and confusion.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Audra is working from the lounge when Brady walks in.

BRADY

Where'd you go today?

AUDRA

What do you mean?

BRADY

Your shoes have moved from where they were this morning.

AUDRA

Oh, I just went for a walk around the block.

BRADY

You just didn't feel like telling me then?

AUDRA

What?

He walks off.

INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MORNING

Audra walks into the kitchen. Brady's finishing up his coffee. Her usual cup isn't sitting there. She grabs a clean cup from the cupboard and sits it on the table next to his.

AUDRA

Okay, that's enough. Talk to me Brady. What's going on with you?

BRADY

Me? What's going on with you?

AUDRA

What are you talking about?

BRADY

You're going to an on-site meeting next week?

AUDRA

Yeah? Wait, did you read the team chat on my work computer?

BRADY

Well I have to, it seems to be the only way I can get any information from you.

AUDRA

Brady. That's a huge violation of my privacy.

BRADY

Only if you have something to hide.

AUDRA

We were only told yesterday that we *might* be. I'm not hiding anything!

BRADY

You're hiding me! I'm not anywhere on your social media, yet you still have photos of you and your ex all over your Instagram.

AUDRA

What am I going to do? Post photos of us in our living room?

BRADY

Oh shut up Audra.

AUDRA

Okay stop. You cannot speak to me like that.

BRADY

You're just deflecting. Go on and make me the bad guy instead of taking responsibility for your lies.

AUDRA

I'm not doing this.

Audra turns to walk away but the coffee mug hits the wall. She freezes, paralysed. He storms out.

INT. APARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY

On the phone to her sister.

AUDRA

I've applied for about 30 places,  
this rental crisis is killing me.

*(beat)*

I would but I can't cross the  
border to get to you.

*(beat)*

I tried, but he said something  
weird like he'd kill himself if I  
ever left him. I know, but he seems  
to think I'm manipulative?

*(beat)*

I think he's home I have to go.

Audra pockets her phone, flushes the toilet and washes her  
hands. She opens the door, he's standing on the other side.

BRADY

Who were you talking to?

AUDRA

No one.

BRADY

Audra.

She tries to leave but he blocks the doorway.

AUDRA

Brady. Please.

The anger dissipates and he's fighting tears.

BRADY

I'm only like this because of how  
much I love you.

Audra, matching his pain, starts to comfort him.

AUDRA

I know Brady. I love you too.

BRADY

*(anger)*

You do not! How can you say that?  
Tell me why you looked up "how to  
break a lease for domestic  
violence?" Seriously?

AUDRA

When did you go through my search h-

BRADY

-Is that what you're telling people about me? That I'm some kind of abuser?

AUDRA

No! No it was for work, I-

Audra pushes passed to get away but he follows.

BRADY

More lies Audra I'm sick of it!

He grabs her arm and spins her into him. Catching her wrists again, this time more sinister.

INT. APARTMENT - AUDRA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Exhausted, Audra sits at her desk, staring in silence. She's broken from her trance by Brady appearing in the doorway.

BRADY

I'm going to the store, do you want anything?

AUDRA

No, I'm okay.

BRADY

(prompting)  
Thank you.

AUDRA

Thank you.

A meeting reminder pops up. She takes a deep breath and clicks JOIN NOW. She forces a smile.

AUDRA (CONT'D)

Hi everyone!

Waving with her right hand, her left is covered in a bandage.

TEAMMATE (O.S.)

I am *loving* working from home. I hope they never make us come back into the office.

Audra smiles and nods politely.