

CONSTANTS:

# TERMINAL C

Written by

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DAVID

My family and I moved to Colorado about two years ago. I work for an art school that transferred me from my remote Boone, North Carolina office, and the city that I had called home for the past fifteen years, to the main college campus that is situated just outside of downtown Denver. I love it here. I love the mountains. I love the snow. I love the people. I love the culture that lives to be outside, celebrates diversity and is crafted with tales of portals, Illuminati and haunted public parks. I love that everyone here wants to keep the community weird. When we touched down in Denver for the first time we were greeted by a statue of a giant blue horse with glowing red eyes and veiny, menacingly large testicles. As we pulled away from Denver International Airport, the driver we had hired let me know that the horse is named Blucifer and during construction it's head had fallen off it's body, killing it's creator. My wife covered my daughter's ears. I think the driver took notice of this because he didn't give us anymore terrifying anecdotes for the remainder of the forty-five minute drive home.

Beat.

DAVID

Upon uprooting my wife and two children, six and two, and moving out west I was faced with a increasingly unrealistic cost of living. I had heard that Denver was more expensive than Boone, and that should be expected, but I was not prepared for the dramatic increase in the price of rent, food and everyday items. But, we love it here, so we decided to make it work. My kids even agreed to share a bedroom for a few years.

(MORE)

## DAVID (CONT'D)

I studied film in college, back in Boone, so I started a videography business to earn some extra income and help offset the added cost of living. Things were good. Many couples travel from out of state for destination weddings and there was enough work to go around. I didn't mind the time away either, as it gave me a reason to explore my new state. Sometimes I would leave a few hours early just so I could navigate the side streets.

## DAVID

A few weeks ago I received an email inquiring about videography services for a wedding. Generally I will start discussing the filming of a wedding six months to a year prior to the date of. This request came in a few days before. There was no contact information or details pertaining to the couple. The email was bare, and contained only the following: "\$10,000 paid in full on Halloween night. We require your services. 9:00pm. Terminal C." Now, the wedding business is not immune to scammers. Basically any time someone can find a way to try and trick you out of your own money, they will. I've had to decline many offers for jobs based solely on the fact that I had a bad feeling about them. In this circumstance, however, I decided to put all of that aside and just go for it. I think the combination of needing the money and feeling pretty brazen now that we had started a new life made me more adventurous than in the past. I figured a roll of the dice couldn't hurt. When Monday, October 31, rolled around I spent some time walking our neighborhood with my kids and watching the look of joy on their faces.

(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

My wife was slightly annoyed, albeit curious, at the fact that I was planning on leaving shortly thereafter to drive out to Denver International Airport with my full array of camera equipment to film a wedding that I knew nothing about. I agreed that the circumstances were bizarre, but if legit, the money was nothing to scoff at. If this was an elaborate hoax I would waste nothing more than a few hours of driving and another chance to see more of this beautiful state. I stole a few peppermint patties, my wife's favorite, out of my son's basket and insisted she eat them. Candy is the great equalizer and I figured that after she had loaded up on sugar she might relax a bit.

DAVID

I was dressed in a black suit. The attire that I wear to weddings can vary depending on the venue, the dress code and the weather. Because I knew next to nothing about the ceremony tonight, I opted to play it safe. Before I put on my jacket, I strapped on a GoPro with a chest mount. I've started to wear a GoPro to every wedding I film now to get added footage that records everything, uninterrupted. The data is automatically uploaded into my cloud. My next foray will be into using a drone, but I haven't made it that far yet. I still take a pretty classic approach to the wedding video game.

Beat.

DAVID

I arrived at the airport, making note of Blucifer as I drove in, and parked at the Pikes Peak lot. I had my camera equipment loaded up in a black, rolling suitcase so that I didn't stand out too much from everyone else.

(MORE)

## DAVID (CONT'D)

I felt uneasy wandering around the airport without a real sense of direction, and it wasn't until I arrived at ticketing that I realized that there was no way I was going to be able to get through to Terminal C without a boarding pass. I approached customer service and an older blonde woman with skin that looked like it was about to melt from her face gave me a dead-eyed acknowledgement. I told her my intentions, and without saying a word she walked around the counter and headed toward baggage claim. Instinctively I followed her. After a few moments she stopped, glanced up toward the ceiling and said "wait here." My eyes followed hers and I realized that I was standing directly underneath a small statue of a gargoyle emerging from a suitcase. I figured this was as good of a time as any to start, so I turned on my GoPro. As I waited I looked around, watching hundreds of people scurry back and forth without noticing anything around them. I had been worried about having a large suitcase and wandering aimlessly, but no one would have paid me any attention anyway. These people were blind to their surroundings. A weathered, handsome gentleman approached me and extended his hand. His blue suit was tailored perfectly so that even with his arm fully extended his pressed dress shirt underneath barely shown under his coat. I noticed his cuff links -- a small, unassuming triangle. He greeted me with a smile and signaled for me to follow him. He walked with a sense of urgency as we entered an elevator just off of the main concourse. He was not overly polite, nor rude in any fashion. He seemed determined to arrive at his destination at a specific and predetermined time. Almost machine-like. The elevator hummed as we made our descent downward.

(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

He offered me a mint, which I declined. We exited, my luggage still lumbering behind me, and began to walk down a long granite corridor. Our footsteps echoed during the walk. Finally we stopped outside of a large wooden door. I could hear the faint sounds of music on the other end mixed with the reverberation of mens' voices. The man in the blue suit looked directly into my eyes and smiled. "Take a few moments to get your equipment set up, and then you can begin." I wanted to ask about an itinerary, what the names of the couple are, what time would this mysterious wedding end, were there any filming restrictions? But for some reason, I could not muster any words. Not a single one. The man continued to smile. "Do you understand?" he asked. I nodded. I started to open my suitcase to remove my camera when the man handed me a mask. It was white with faux feathers and a long beak, much like the gargoyle I had seen near baggage claim. "Before you enter, put this on." I stared back. "It's just a formality. You will feel much more comfortable with it on, trust me." The man then offered me a mint for the second time. Not breaking eye contact with him, I collected the mint from his hand and popped it into my mouth. He smiled, crooked and slight. Then, he turned and started his journey down the intimidatingly long hallway. The man's footsteps once again echoed as I adjusted my Steadicam mount. Eventually, they stopped. I looked up and I was alone.

Long beat. Subtle sounds of the morning.

DAVID

The sun was blinding.  
(MORE)

## DAVID (CONT'D)

I moved my arm up to my eyes to block out the light as I blinked repeatedly and rapidly, hoping to adjust to the morning. My two year old daughter crawled up onto my stomach and started banging on my chest. "Wake up, daddy!" she bellowed. I sat up in bed. My wife stood in our doorway, staring back at me with a steaming cup of coffee in her hand. "Good morning. You planning on sleeping the entire day?" I was confused. I grabbed my phone and looked at the time.

10:22am. Tuesday morning. Shit, I was late for work. I quickly hopped out of bed and rushed toward the bathroom to take a shower. "Slow down," my wife called after me. "Take a look outside. We got like three feet of snow last night. Roads are a mess. Your school is closed today." I stared blankly back at her. "You think I would have let you oversleep? Go take a shower and come have coffee with me." My wife grabbed our daughter and slowly closed the bedroom door. I rubbed my eyes and started to take off my shirt, wincing. I had a small bandage on the left side of my ribcage. I don't remember that being there yesterday. Did I cut myself? Small amounts of blood had seeped through the bandage. I heard my wife whisper to my daughter as the door shut behind her, "daddy is very tired. He didn't get home until almost 4:00am."

Beat. A shower.

## DAVID

The water from the shower-head felt like cold needles on my skin. I tried to remember the events from the night before, but I couldn't recall anything that happened. My mind raced while simultaneously feeling clogged up. Had I drank too much? How did I get home? Where did the bandage come from?

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## DAVID (CONT'D)

I peeled it back and a small incision, stitched up and surprisingly almost healed broke through underneath. The last fleeting moment I can recall was the sound of the man in the blue suit walking down the hallway. The echoing of the shoes felt like a stabbing pain in my head. I wrapped a towel around my waist and went back into my bedroom. I picked up my camera and flipped it on, navigating to the playback screen. There was nothing. The memory card was blank. I removed the card and inserted another. Again, nothing. Black screen. Blank card. I finished drying off and went out to the living room. My wife was smiling at me and she handed me a cup of coffee. "I already checked our account and as of this morning \$10,000 was deposited and pending. Seems like it was worth it." I stared back. "It is? The money is there?" Now my head was pounding. My wife asked me how everything went, I lied and told her it all went well. She asked me how the footage looked. I told her it was great. She asked me if the couple seemed to be in love. "They are," I said. My son interrupted my trance. "Dad, can we go sledding?" I forced a smile. I dressed the kids in their snow jackets. From the closet I grabbed their sleds and rubbed some oil on the runners. Time to be a normal human with normal human responsibilities, I thought. Before heading outside I grabbed my GoPro from the camera bag. We always strap the GoPro onto ourselves when we do things outdoors. It makes our home movies very exciting. My son likes to pretend he's hosting a outdoor exploration show. I watched *Planet Earth* with him and now he thinks he's David Attenborough. He even tries to do an English accent. It's... adorable.

Beat.

DAVID

The camera itself was already in the chest strap, and I suddenly remembered that I had been wearing it all night. I picked up my laptop and quickly logged into my cloud. I pulled up a continuous shot that was one large file. I pressed play and I was back at the airport, watching travelers walk back and forth, oblivious. My son yelled out to me. He was ready to go brave the arctic cold. I yelled back to him, I needed five minutes. I jumped forward in the timeline.

Beat.

DAVID

I was walking down the corridor. The man in the tailored suit ahead of me. The echo of our shoes. I jumped forward again. The entire party was filled with guests in masks. Masks, much like the one the man had handed me to wear before I entered. The party-goers did not pay me much attention as they sipped on their cocktails and mingled with one another. I was just another gargoyle that no one bothered to notice. I jumped forward once more. The room was dimly lit, only by candlelight. A nightmare for clean footage, but I've dealt with much worse. I walked slowly toward a large stone slab in the middle of the room. Cloaked figures flanked both sides of the table. Their masks hid their faces and their hoods hid their gender. Based on the height and build of the figures, I would guess that most were male. As I moved in closer I could see a figure laying on the slab. She was completely nude, her face covered by a mask. It was hard to guess her age, but I would imagine mid-20's based on her body. Her arms and legs were bound to the corners of the table with a thick, blood-red ribbon.

(MORE)

## DAVID (CONT'D)

She did not struggle as she laid spread out for the cloaked men to stare at her. There were no words and very little sound. For a room this size with this many people in it, it was deathly quiet. In unison, the men started to hum. The hum grew louder and louder and the woman on the table started to writhe. The merging of the individual voices grew to a fever pitch. The circle of men shuffled their formation and allowed for a small entrance where another figure entered. This person, too, was cloaked in much the same way, but his mask was pure white. No features, just white porcelain. Without warning, the humming stopped. The woman on the table stopped moving. Deafening silence. The man disrobed. He too was stark naked in front of the table. To his left, another robed figure handed him a knife. Only, this knife looked old and worn. It's handle appeared wrapped in leather in the candlelight. The blade was jagged. I'd be inclined to call it a dagger. The naked man licked the edge of the blade. He slowly bent over the bound woman and slid the dagger across her stomach. Not enough to inflict any pain, but enough to see her body tremble. When he was finished he stood erect and surveyed the room. The silence was unnerving. Finally, he said to the room "On this day, let us celebrate." Without warning he lifted the knife high above his head. Both hands gripped the handle tightly with the blade facing down. The woman's body shook. The door to my bedroom swung open and my son and daughter charged in. I quickly shut the laptop and placed it aside. "Come on, daddy! Let's go sledding!" my son called out. I was trembling as I looked back at him. "I'll be just one more minute." I gathered myself and put on my snow jacket.

(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

My snowshoes were nearly impossible to slip on with my hands shaking as badly as they were. Luckily, my gloves masked some of my nerves. I couldn't concentrate as every noise in the house was amplified in my head. That hangover feeling again. The television, the kids chattering, the phone ringing. The phone ringing. Why was the phone ringing? I could tell that I was sweating, so I wiped my face on my sleeve. Returning to the living room, I picked up my son and threw him over my shoulder, doing my best to regain normalcy. "Alright, let's go" I said." I'm gonna throw you into a snow pile." As we started to walk out the front door my wife called out for me. "Hey, hun. There is a man on the phone for you. He says he was at the ceremony last night and he *wants to inquire about your future services.*"

Beat.

DAVID

I stared back at her for a moment, before replying. "Yeah. Yeah, of course. Tell him I'll call him back."

## Terminal C

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Cineidola (2019)

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