

Fading

By

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Based on

A (Partially) True Story

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EXT. LIGONG TRAFFIC INTERSECTION, NOON SHARP

It is raining. A BOY is waiting for his friend at the corner of a traffic light holding an umbrella. He looks at his watch for the time and then he takes out his phone and checks whether he has received a message regarding the delay. He is shivering and puts his hand into his pocket. The boy stares at the traffic light as it changes from green to yellow to red while waiting desperately for the GIRL.

He is staring at the end of road and the camera pans to the street as people are walking. Still no sign of her.

He lights a cigarette and the camera is medium close-up on his profile. He begins to daydream about how to make the day memorable.

(His Imagination)

The boy invites the girl to stand under his umbrella rather than open hers.

The boy puts the girl on the opposite direction of the cars while crossing the road and passing by pedestrians.

INT. COFFEE SHOP, EARLY AFTERNOON

The boy buys the girl a coffee on the way. Camera is on the boy while he is in line at the coffee shop and he looks over and he sees the girl at the end of the street.

EXT. LIGONG TRAFFIC INTERSECTION, NOON SHARP

The boy sees the girl at the end of the street. He begins to walk softly toward the girl with a cold smile. She walks over and they shake hands and have a warm hug.

GIRL

I'm sorry for being late. I forgot my umbrella and ran back to the elevator but I already missed it. Accept my apology. Have you been waiting here for a long time?

BOY

You have nothing to worry about. I was enjoying every drop of rain while waiting for you.

(CONTINUED)

GIRL  
That's so sweet of you.

BOY  
Well, shall we go?

GIRL  
Do you know how to get there?

BOY  
Huh, people tell me I should be a  
taxi driver here since I know every  
corner..

GIRL  
Okay Mr. GPS, let's move.

INT. COFFEE SHOP, JUST AFTER NOON

GIRL  
Tell me, why did you choose this  
coffee shop?

BOY  
Cheap and convenient.

GIRL  
So honest.

BOY  
It's in my blood.

GIRL  
Okay, Mr. Humble. What shall we  
drink?

BOY  
The cheapest coffee.

GIRL  
Don't worry, I can pay for you.

BOY  
I just want to remember those tough  
times.

The boy asks the cashier about two Americanos.

The boy pays for the coffees and they go to sit by the  
window.

(CONTINUED)

GIRL

But now you can enjoy more.

BOY

This moment will make me enjoy,  
rather than the drink itself. As  
Bob Marley said, Money cannot buy  
life.

GIRL

I cannot wait to read your book one  
day.

BOY

I prefer to publish it one hundred  
years after my death.

GIRL

Coffee time now. Death later.

BOY

Okay, joy killer.

The coffees arrive and the scene fades away.

INT. CLASSROOM, BREAK BETWEEN CLASSES, MID MORNING

The INTRUDER sees the girl in the hallway and moves toward  
her eagerly with a shy smile and a red face.

INTRUDER

Good morning. How was the class?

GIRL

Morning. It was somehow good but  
too much for my brain this early.

INTRUDER

This early? You mean time or it's  
early for you to learn this topic?

The girl smiles.

GIRL

Of course I mean the time of day.

INTRUDER

Do you like coffee?

GIRL

Well it depends on my mood.

(CONTINUED)

INTRUDER

I would love to ask if there is any chance you are free this weekend?

GIRL

I'm sorry, my schedule is really tight, and you know I am passing through a very harsh time regarding my study. If you excuse me, I need to use the washroom.

INTRUDER

Oh, sorry I did not mean to take your time.

GIRL

Nice chatting with you. See you in class.

The girl leaves to the washroom. The intruder returns to class.

INT. OFFICE, EARLY MORNING

The boy and the intruder happen to run into each other. They hug each other and shake hands very firmly.

BOY

Hello sir, how is your day so far?

INTRUDER

So far so good.

BOY

I even see you more than my own shadow.

The intruder laughs.

INTRUDER

Regarding the volunteering, we have enough members and we can start from next week.

BOY

As long as I have you by my side, I have nothing to worry about. You did an amazing job.

INTRUDER

It is my pleasure and I will take it as a compliment.

(CONTINUED)

BOY

How is your love life by the way?

INTRUDER

You know me. I am not as cool or handsome as you. I have to go to the office now to finish a task. I will catch up with you later.

BOY

No worries. Take your time. I have to go also.

They cross paths and walk in opposite directions while saying farewell/goodbye/See you to each other.

INT. CAFE, LATE AFTERNOON/EARLY EVENING

Close-up shot of the phones of the Girl and the Intruder text messaging back and forth.

After a long time of text messaging for several days, they finally come up with a time to meet for a platonic cup of coffee.

They meet at the gate of their university. They greet each other in a friendly way.

INTRUDER

How are you so far? How was your day? How are your studies?

GIRL

I'm doing pretty good. Less busier then before. But I feel a kind of homesickness.

INTRUDER

I hope today I can relieve some of your burden.

The Girl smiles coldly.

GIRL

Shall we move now?

INTRUDER

I think this is the right time.

They both look around toward the coffee shop without saying a word.

(CONTINUED)

INTRUDER

So are you going to keep silent  
like this for the rest of your day?

GIRL

(looking shy)

What shall I say? I don't know  
where to start.

INTRUDER

Soon you will realize.

The Intruder smiles.

They arrive at the door of the coffee shop.

The Intruder opens the door for the Girl.

GIRL

You are so gentle. Thank you.

INTRUDER

I am really honored having you with  
me today.

They walk up to the cashier.

INTRUDER

Do you have any selections,  
anything you would like to order?

GIRL

An Americano would be great for me.

INTRUDER

How should a sweet girl like you  
could take something so bitter?

GIRL

Thank you.

INTRUDER

Can you stop saying thank you for  
God's sake? I'm trying to be a  
little bit more romantic.

GIRL

Okay, I'm sorry.

INTRUDER

No need. And don't be so academic.  
You are not hanging out with your  
professor.

(CONTINUED)

CASHIER

Can I take your orders please?

INTRUDER

Two Americanos, please. With a plate of waffles.

CASHIER

That will be 75 RMB.

INTRUDER

Can I pay by WeChat?

CASHIER

Yeah, for sure. Let me scan your code.

The Cashier scans the code and gives the receipt to the Intruder.

CASHIER

Have a seat and you will be served soon.

INTRUDER

Indeed, thank you.

The Intruder turns to the girl.

INTRUDER

Do you have a favorite place to sit?

FLASHBACK, EARLY EVENING

The Girl is staring off. She thinks back to the time she went with the Boy to the same coffee shop.

BACK TO THE SCENE

INTRUDER

Are you here?

GIRL

Yeah, for sure. Anywhere but the windows.

INTRUDER

Cool. There are empty seats over there. We can go have a seat. After you, please.

(CONTINUED)



GIRL  
So kind of you.

They move toward the empty table and sit down on big chairs. They begin to talk. Soft background music begins to play and the audience cannot hear their conversation. Close-up shot on the coffees and the scene fades away. It is afternoon.

After long hours of talking, the Girl feels more relaxed and at ease. The camera comes back as a medium shot of the window. From the window we see it is now dark outside.

GIRL  
Today was amazing and I really enjoyed. But I think it is the right time to go back to the dorm.

INTRUDER  
I don't want to be pushy, though this is the moment I was afraid of since the beginning.

The girl smiles warmly.

GIRL  
We have more time to meet up. You are such a kind boy.

INTRUDER  
Well, up to midnight. But then I will turn into the beast.

GIRL  
What do you mean?

INTRUDER  
You will realize it soon.

They both stand up and put on their jackets and leave the table.

They leave the coffee shop and move back to the dorm.

EXT. PARK NEAR CITY CENTER, LATE EVENING

The Girl, the Boy, and the Intruder are at a park near shopping stores. There is wind and soft rain.

BOY  
Here we are once again. The three of us. (talking to the Intruder)  
How is your romantic life?

(CONTINUED)

INTRUDER

(chuckles)

Well, so far so good. And I'm enjoying it.

BOY

Then let the single one smoke a cigarette since it could be the best girl friend.

GIRL

Do you mind if I have a cigarette too?

BOY

With pleasure. If your boyfriend allows you.

INTRUDER

She is a grown up girl. She can decide herself.

BOY

Here you are, Princess. Shall I light it for you?

GIRL

Who taught you to be so kind?

The Boy lights the cigarette for the Girl and she leans her head in.

The Intruder looks at both of them in a very jealous way. He takes the hand of the girl and moves himself close to her softly and in a romantic way.

INTRUDER

Honey, do you like anything to drink?

GIRL

Not now, maybe later the three of us can all drink together.

BOY

How about we find a takeaway coffee shop and grab our coffees while we are walking? In this rainy weather, nothing can be better than a coffee and a cigarette for me. And a warm hug for you two.

(CONTINUED)

GIRL

That's a good idea. Let's go grab some.

INTRUDER

But I need a cigarette too.

BOY

Your cigarette is on me. Here you are.

The Boy gives the Intruder a cigarette and a lighter.

BOY

Serve yourself.

The Intruder lights his cigarette and gives the lighter back to the Boy.

INTRUDER

Thanks.

BOY

Anytime. You are more than welcome.

GIRL

Oh, look. I found a coffee shop. Let's go grab our coffees.

INTRUDER

Okay, sweetie. Let us go.

The three of them move toward the coffee shop. They finish their cigarettes and flick the butts.

The Intruder opens the door for the girl.

INTRUDER

Ladies first.

GIRL

Thank you, my piece of cake.

BOY

And am I the plate!?!

GIRL

C'mon, you are the cherry on top.

Still, the Intruder is holding the door open.

(CONTINUED)

INTRUDER

Okay, okay, let's go in. It's cold outside. And I am the one holding the door.

The three of them go inside. He shuts the door behind himself.

BOY

(to the Intruder)

I wish I would have been a girl. To be your second girlfriend. Let's try your taste. Order for us and tonight it will be on me.

INTRUDER

Okay, then. Leave it to me. (to the cashier) Three cappuccinos, please.

CASHIER

Dine in or take away?

INTRUDER

(to the girl and the boy)

You heard, which one do you prefer more?

GIRL

Let's grab it out.

INTRUDER

(to the cashier)

Okay, then. Takeaway please.

CASHIER

Okay. That will be 21 yuan.

BOY

Can I pay by Wechat?

CASHIER

Oh, yes.

The Boy pays the bill through scanning the QR code.

CASHIER

They will be ready in a minute.

While the cashier is preparing them, the Intruder puts his arm around the Girl and keeps her close to him while smelling the perfume of the Girl and smiling to the Boy.

(CONTINUED)

BOY

Okay, you can have your romantic time until the coffee will be ready. I will go breathe some fresh air. (with a cold smile)

INTRUDER

Okay, take your time.

The camera is in front (a bit to the right) of the Boy as he goes out for some fresh air and lights another cigarette. The camera holds for a moment and blurs out of focus on the boy and focuses on the couples inside while enjoying their romantic cuddling with laughter and warmhearted smiles.

CASHIER

Here you are.

The Intruder takes the three cappuccinos, gives one to the girl and comes out and gives the other one to the boy.

BOY

Ah, that's very kind of you.

INTRUDER

Indeed, thanks for the invitation bro.

The Boy laughs.

BOY

Okay, let's now move our muscles and walk around. This is Christmas so we should enjoy every bit of it.

GIRL

Hooray, let's move.

All three of them are walking around. The Boy is enjoying the cigarette with a sip of cappuccino and the couple are enjoying the romantic moment.

SCENE FADES TO BLACK.

EXT. HIKING, LATE MORNING

It is a sunny day and there is a fresh breeze. The three of them agreed to go hiking that day.

GIRL

This is my favorite part. Going hiking. I've been waiting for this for so long.

(CONTINUED)

INTRUDER

We have a long day of walking. Are you guys ready?

GIRL

I am always good to go for this kind of activity.

BOY

As far as we enjoy, that is what matters to me.

INTRUDER

Any specific place to go?

GIRL

How about East Lake? There is a good place for hiking.

BOY

Yeah, I know even how to get there by bus.

The three of them move to the bus station to take the bus.

On the way there, all three of them laugh and make jokes. The camera blurs of them at the bus station and transitions to them at the gate of East Lake.

EXT. MOUNTAIN, EARLY AFTERNOON

BOY

This is the big day and we have a lot to enjoy.

GIRL

I can only imagine how lovely it will be today.

INTRUDER

With you, everything will be perfect.

GIRL

Thanks, sweetie. You are the full part of my day.

BOY

I should find a girlfriend to enjoy more.

(CONTINUED)

INTRUDER

We will find one for you if you like.

GIRL

Just tell us your type.

BOY

That's the problem, I don't have a type. Or, I am no one's type.

GIRL

You always say so. But we see many girls wish to have you.

BOY

Who knows? But I am not interested in them for now.

INTRUDER

Just tell me whenever you are ready.

BOY

Do you have an agency or what?

INTRUDER

For you, I can always find one.

GIRL

Yes, we can do that easily.

BOY

Okay, okay. Let's enjoy today and we will discuss that later.

The three of them move around the lake and pass under the trees. They walk along the road to the peak of the mountain.

INTRUDER

(looking at the girl)

Do you feel tired?

The girl stares at the boy, they exchange a look.

GIRL

How can I feel tired while my red bull is here?

BOY

I am so glad to see you in such a deep relationship.

(CONTINUED)

INTRUDER

Thanks bro.

They all laugh and enjoy. They take selfies and stroll on.

The Intruder's jealousy fades away (to some extent) although it is not gone altogether.

SCENE FADES TO BLACK.

INT. METRO STATION, AFTERNOON.

The Boy grabs his luggage and looks at the couple so deeply.

BOY

This is the time to say goodbye.

The Girl starts to cry.

GIRL

But you can apply for another degree here, or you can stay here a little bit longer.

INTRUDER

We are going to miss you a lot.

BOY

I will miss you two more. And I have really enjoyed meeting both of you. Just promise me you will keep this smile on your faces all the time.

GIRL

Do we have a chance to meet each other again somewhere? Another time?

BOY

Who knows what the future will bring. We never planned to meet each other in the first place, yet here we are.

GIRL

So it was fate that brought us together?

BOY

Only God knows. We will meet each other again, but not yet. Not yet.

(CONTINUED)



GIRL  
(tears in her eyes)  
Always inspired by Gladiator.

BOY  
This is me. Free again.

The Intruder looks at both of them in a puzzled way.

BOY  
I think if I stay any longer, I  
will miss my flight.

The Boy hugs the Intruder and then shakes hands firmly with the girl. She does not want to let go of his hand.

BOY  
(to both of them)  
Our physical bodies will be apart  
now, but our memories will never  
fade away.

The camera is close-up on the tears of the girl's eyes and the camera pans to the boy's back as he turns to grab his luggage.

FLASHBACK, EARLY EVENING

The girl thinks of all the memories she had with the boy in the coffee shop, running into him on the sidewalk, at East Lake, and in the morning outside the dorms.

BACK TO THE METRO STATION

The Boy starts to walk. The camera holds on the girl as she watches him and waits until he turns around for the last time.

The Boy never does.

Medium shot of the boy lowering his head. He puts in his earphones and continues moving in a slow and weak way. The song from the end of Gladiator begins to play.

The Girl puts her arm around the Intruder while continuing to stare at the Boy.

INTRUDER  
Can I ask you a question?

(CONTINUED)

GIRL

Uh-huh.

INTRUDER

Did you have anything with him  
before me?

GIRL

It's a long story. Nothing special.  
Only God knows.

INTRUDER

But now you are with me.

GIRL

Don't be jealous. He was just a  
good friend.

INTRUDER

Was?

GIRL

Well, for now. He is was.

INTRUDER

I can feel that, princess.

GIRL

Thanks, my shadow.

The Camera is set up for a long, wide shot over the shoulder  
(OTS) of the back of the girl and intruder all the way to  
the boy.

The lights dim and the film ends.