

Audiovisual Staging Short Film
"The Voices"

Written by
Daniel Johannes Lange

FADE IN:

1 INT. APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

An alarm clock is seen in the foreground, showing a time that is way too late in the day to begin a regular routine, and yet the STUDENT (24) lies in the background, blissfully sleeping.

This bliss doesn't last, as they are woken up by a phone call, their hand reaching over to grab their phone from behind the alarm clock.

The audience hears the call being declined, and watches them turn over mindlessly scrolling on their phone.

The voices start talking. They sound tired and annoyed, layered in their disgust of the protagonist.

DEPRESSION

"Why are you still in bed?"

The STUDENT continues scrolling absentmindedly on their phone.

DEPRESSION (CONT'D)

"You've got work to do, remember? So stop being so fucking lazy, idiot, and get up already!"

The STUDENT finally lets their phone fall onto their covers. They get up to a sitting position, facing away from the camera and putting their hands on their face, rubbing their eyes.

They stand up and walk out the left side of the screen.

CUT TO:

2 INT. BATHROOM - AFTERNOON

The camera is showing the bathroom mirror, as the STUDENT walks in front of it, finally showing the audience their face for the first time, and yet not really.

They look tired. Very tired. Tired enough to make the viewer question if they got any rest despite the fact that they have been sleeping well into the afternoon. Something is not right with them, that much is obvious.

The voices start talking again.

DEPRESSION

"You're disgusting, you know that? How can you live like this? What is wrong with you?"

The STUDENT is just staring at themselves, until they grip the sink and put their head down. They've been living with this internal monologue for so long, that they have grown numb to its insults.

DEPRESSION (CONT'D)

"Might as well brush your teeth while we are here."

The STUDENT starts brushing their teeth, and starts to walk around the room, while the voices continue berating them.

DEPRESSION (CONT'D)

"It's no wonder that you are so alone. You are genuinely fucking hopeless. Like, you really have no redeeming qualities, not a single one."

They sit down at the edge of the room, sliding down against the wall.

DEPRESSION (CONT'D)

"All you ever do is eat, sleep, drink, and waste away, rotting here all by your pitiful self. And the only one who ever talks to you is yourself."

DEPRESSION (CONT'D)

(sarcastically)

"What a wonderful life to live..."

They stop brushing, for a moment, and pull their knees to their chest with the toothbrush still in their mouth. A moment passes. They sob once, putting their head down.

DEPRESSION (CONT'D)

"... Get up, and spit out the rest."

The STUDENT does as they tell themselves.

DEPRESSION (CONT'D)

"Now wash your face and get out of here... think we're done."

The STUDENT washes their face, and opens the door, slamming it shut behind themselves. The screen goes black.

CUT TO:

3 INT. LIVING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

The screen of the STUDENTS laptop shows up in the blackscreen, and afterwards the rest of the frame starts fading in.

They are sitting in front of it, and the camera is filming them from behind, showing their screen and their desk.

They hold their phone up to the camera, and the screen is showing a calendar reminder, of their projects deadline being in about 48 hours.

DEPRESSION

"Well... it seems like you've wasted enough time as is.
We both know you haven't even
started working on this assignment."

The STUDENT puts the phone down.

STUDENT

"I guess I have to pull 2 a double all nighter for this one..."

DEPRESSION

"Might as well go get your fill of caffeine then, your physical well-being is the least of our worries."

The student gets up and leaves the screen to the right.

CUT TO:

3.A. INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER AFTERNOON

The STUDENT returns and sits 8 energy drinks down on their desk.

They crack their knuckles, stretch their neck, and open up their work document.

DEPRESSION

"We only have these 2 days.
I need you on your A-Game,
alright?"

Somehow you can see the STUDENT roll their eyes, even though you physically can't see them.

DEPRESSION

"Look, I hate your stinking guts, but we need this to be perfect.
And this is literally the only thing you're good at."

CUT TO:

4. INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER AFTERNOON

We cut to a different view of the same scene, the perspective putting the STUDENT in the middle of the frame this time, their open Laptop in front of them, their unmade bed behind them, and in the background you see their living room window, showing the beautiful afternoon sun and skyline.

DEPRESSION

"Let's fucking go, idiot."

And they start going hard.

They put on their headphones, and their background work music plays.

It's melancholic, but rhythmic, as it allows them to be creative and keep a steady work flow.

The fore of the screen darkens, until only the black silhouette of the STUDENT, their desk, their energy drinks and their Laptop are left.

A time-lapse starts, and in the background the sun starts setting.

Then the moon rises. It's a beautiful full moon tonight. A can of energy disappears.

Then the moon falls again.

Another can disappears.

The morning sun rises.

A beautiful day unfolds as the student is stuck working on their assignment.

Another can disappears.

The sun starts setting again.

Another can disappears.

DEPRESSION

"Keep it going idiot, no use in stopping now."

The STUDENT doesn't take any breaks, they've already wasted enough time.

And they hate themselves for it.

Nightfall comes, and the Student keeps working.

Another can disappears.

The night is cloudy, and very dark. No moon to be seen tonight, only the light of their laptop is illuminating their silhouette.

The morning sun rises.

Two cans of energy disappear.

It's almost time.

HARD CUT TO:

4.A. INT. LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

The music abruptly stops.

We cut to a close up shot of the STUDENT gasping with bloodshot eyes.

They've taken the final sip of their last can of bottled energy.

They have stayed awake for about 46 hours, and have ingested 1440 mg of caffeine.

DEPRESSION

"What, can't even handle 8 cans anymore? I've kept my mouth shut so you can focus, but uh, you good, idiot?"

The STUDENT blinks twice, they look like death. We zoom out a little bit, they are breathing heavily.

DEPRESSION (CONT'D)

"Hey... you don't look that great, dude. Something is very wrong... uhm..."

The STUDENT grasps their left pec, and starts hyperventilating. They suddenly become very pale.

DEPRESSION (CONT'D)

"Yo, don't you die on me!
HEY! STAY WITH ME!
DON'T LEAVE ME HERE ALONE!"

The screen abruptly cuts to black.

FADE OUT:
FIN.