

THE INSOMNIAC

Written by

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Note: There will be instances of flash-forwards and dream sequences, and it will be visualized through *italics*.

1

OVER BLACK

1

A clock ticks over the darkness. Each tick represents a second.

"Every tick you have heard is in the **past**, every tick you hear is in the **present**, what you anticipate is the **future**."

The ticking, along with the quote, fades out. A woman's voice, who is Joey's mother, speaks in voiceover --

JOEY'S MOM (V.O.)

I know you've been iffy about the move... but this is the best for us, for you.

2

INT. BEDROOM - EVENING

2

JOEY JACOBS (17), sits on the edge of his bed, thinking to himself. He has dark circles beneath his eyes that resembles the result of his sleeping problems.

JOEY'S MOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Even though you got in trouble at your last school, we're moving past that now, okay? You're going to make a lot of friends at this new school. We do have to keep talking about your anger management, and we're going to see about those classes again.

3

INT./EXT. JOEY'S CAR - MORNING

3

Joey at the wheel, headed to school. He admires the scenery outside.

JOEY'S MOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I told Dr. Jones about that incident. I know you don't like talking about it, but you should tell her that everything **blacks** out on you when you get angry. I love you, have a good day at school, I'll be back home soon.

Joey pulls into an open parking space in the lot. He looks out the window, taking a heavy, relaxed sigh. He blinks sleepily.

A beat, then, a group of three: LAYLA, NATHAN, AND ERICA (all 17-18), walk past his car, and towards the front of the school. Joey gazes at them, studying the three.

He checks the time: **8:21 am**. With a sigh, he leans back into his seat --

MATCH CUT TO:

4 **INT. BEDROOM - AFTERNOON**

4

Joey leans back into bed. Wide shot shows the lonely, blue-hue nature of his room. His bed-side clock reads: **4:16 pm**.
CUE MUSIC.

MOMENTS LATER: Joey sets a stack of papers on his desk. He sits down, reading through his homework. He blinks sleepily, on the verge of sleep. Time reads: **6:40 pm**.

MATCH CUT -- Joey continues sitting at his desk, time now reading **9:27 pm**. He reaches for an item on his desk -- an INHALER -- and takes in a dose.

5 **INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT**

5

The door's closed, but we can hear the shower running inside. The water stops, and shortly afterwards, the door opens, revealing Joey, wearing a new set of clothes. He starts brushing his teeth.

Afterwards, he puts two pills (presumably for sleeping), into his mouth. He washes it down with water.

6 **INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT**

6

Joey lies in bed, tucking himself in. He closes his eyes.

Minutes pass, Joey repositions himself, trying to make himself fall asleep...

Minutes turn to hours, Joey thrashes around in the sheets, now frustrated of his sleeplessness. He looks to the ceiling, zoning out as we --

MATCH CUT TO:

MORNING.

Joey, in the same position, gets out of his bed, looking at the time: **7:32 am**.

7 INT. JOEY'S CAR (MOVING) - MORNING 7

Joey at the wheel. He's on his way to school. The time reads 8:00 am.

8 INT. JOEY'S CAR (PARKING LOT) - MOMENTS LATER 8

He is fast asleep at the wheel. A nearby conversation is heard from the outside. They're seen from the car window; it's the three we've seen earlier -- Layla Reynolds, Nathan Finch, and Erica Banks.

Layla is seen shuddering, her arms folded to cover herself from the coldness outside. She looks for probable shelter, and looks towards us, at Joey's car. She turns to her two friends, and they're now approaching Joey's car.

WHACK! Layla's hands smack the driver's window, Joey SHUDDERS -- now awake. He looks around, surprised, he looks up to see Layla, who is now guilty for surprising him.

LAYLA
(muffled)
Hi! Sorry, it's freezing out here,
could you let us in?

A brief flash of uncertainty on Joey's face, he slightly nods, not saying anything.

LAYLA (CONT'D)
Oh my God! You're the best!

He unlocks the door, then suddenly, the group of three pile into the backseat of his car.

NATHAN
Thank God, that's so much better.

ERICA
Move your fat-ass Nathan, I can't sit properly.

NATHAN
You're the fat-ass.

LAYLA
(to the two)
Guys, manners, manners.

She peeks up to the driver's seat, to Joey.

LAYLA (CONT'D)
Thank you again, by the way.

JOEY
Y-yeah... no problem.

A look of recognition appears on Erica's face, she leans forward, studying Joey's face. Joey shifts, now feeling even more uncomfortable.

ERICA
Wait a minute... you're in my Chem class... you're Joey, right?

Joey's surprised that she even recognized him. He nods, a slight smile spreading across his cheeks.

JOEY
Yeah... I sit right next to you.

ERICA
Yeah!

JOEY
You're... Eric, right?

ERICA
Erica.

JOEY
Ah, that makes more sense.

NATHAN
We need to reward Joey for offering us warmth in his car.

Erica turns back to the backseat.

ERICA
We really should.

JOEY
N-no... it's fine.

LAYLA
No! We're gonna grab a bite to eat after school, you're comin'.

JOEY
(*can't say no to that*)
Okay.

The morning bell can be heard ringing from outside. Nathan and Erica exit the car.

NATHAN
Thanks Joey!

ERICA
Thanks!

Layla leans forward, cellphone in hand.

LAYLA

Wait, here's my number...

9 **EXT. PARKING LOT - SAME TIME**

9

WIDE SHOT -- from the parking lot, we can see Layla exchanging contacts with Joey. She hops out the car, waving bye, catching up with her friends shortly afterwards.

10 **INT. JOEY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS**

10

Joey stares ahead, watching the group of three enter the school. He grabs something from his pocket, his inhaler -- and takes a dose.

11 **EXT. SHOPPING PLAZA - AFTERNOON**

11

Joey sits at an empty bench in a shopping plaza. The plaza is mostly empty, but is filled of restaurants and small shops still in business. He checks the time: **4:16 pm.**

MOMENTS LATER: Joey is looking a little bored. He checks the time yet again, **4:30 pm.** He looks around, trying to see if they're anywhere near him. Nothing seen. He slumps in the chair, waiting...

LATER...

4:47 pm. He gets up, about to leave --

NATHAN

Boo!

JOEY

AH!!

The group of three approach him from behind. Joey gathers his bearings.

JOEY (CONT'D)

When did you guys get here?

NATHAN

Just now. Sorry, didn't mean to scare you like that.

Joey takes out his inhaler, takes a puff.

JOEY
It's alright.

The three are now walking, headed to a distant restaurant in the plaza. Joey stands there, confused.

JOEY (CONT'D)
Where are we going?

ERICA
Explorin'. Catch up.

Joey jogs up to them. CUE MUSIC.

LATER: The group eats outside at a small table, Joey doesn't speak, he's not used to the social environment. Layla turns to him, dragging him into a conversation. The group of three laugh after he speaks, he SMILES at this, enjoying the attention.

12 **INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT**

12

Joey lies in bed, his evening routine already finished. He stares up at the wall, and the slightest smile forms on his face. He closes his eyes.

CUT TO:

Green scenery. Rolling fields -- a PARK. We're in a dream... there's a glowing filter displayed over the visuals.

Various close-ups of Layla, Nathan, and Erica, all laughing.

Inside a car -- looking through the windshield, a parking lot, giving way to the park, its rolling fields in the distance.

We're now in the fields... and we can see a black sedan circling the parking lot, ominously.

13 **EXT. PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON**

13

After school, Joey hops into the driver's seat of his car, but he's not alone, the other three, Layla, Erica, and Nathan, enter the car, Layla getting in the passenger's seat. Joey pulls out of the parking lot.

14 **INT. JOEY'S CAR (MOVING) - CONTINUOUS**

14

Layla shows Joey the directions to their hangout spot...

LAYLA
It's on 1282 Campus Lane...

JOEY
Okay...

He types it into his car's GPS system before he turns right.

LATER: Joey drives into a round-about, his car entering a PARKING LOT. He sees the parking lot give way to the *green, rolling fields... a PARK*. The one he's seen from his *dream*.

The car rolls to a stop. He observes the location, curious...

NATHAN
(muffled)
Joey...
(now clear)
Joey.

Joey comes to.

JOEY
Right. Sorry.

He pulls into a parking space, the lot itself is mostly empty.

15 **EXT. THE PARK - MOMENTS LATER**

15

In SLOW-MOTION, Joey follows closely behind his friends, who are walking on the fields.

His POV of Layla, *laughing, looking at Erica, exactly how the dream was shown*.

His POV of Erica, *doing the same, smiling back at Layla, she turns back to Joey, still grinning*.

LATER: The group of four sit on top of a hill. Joey stares ahead.

ERICA
I'm stumped.

LAYLA
Tired of walking?

NATHAN
I'm hungry...

Layla looks at Joey, following his gaze to the parking lot. She PALES upon the sight of something.

POV of that same *black sedan* circling the parking lot. The backseat window pulls down, a hand reaches out, waving at the group of four.

NATHAN (CONT'D)
Is that...?

LAYLA
Yeah.

JOEY
Who are they?

The sedan circles the parking lot once more, before exiting the park area.

ERICA
Matthew, Layla's ex. Him and his asshole friends have been stalking us for a while.

Joey looks back at the parking lot, his concern growing. Layla consoles him.

LAYLA
Don't worry about them, they're just dicks.

16 **INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT** 16

Joey in his bed, wrapped in the sheets, sleeping...

Back inside the dream, we're in the car, driving to school. It's 8 am.

17 **INT. JOEY'S CAR (MOVING) - MORNING** 17

In real life, Joey clocks the time, admiring the sunrise from his windshield.

Now 8:12 am, his friends are seen approaching his car in the PARKING LOT.

Real-time, Joey watches the rear view mirror as they approach.

18 **INT. JOEY'S CAR (MOVING) - AFTERNOON** 18

Dream-space, Joey is on his way home, clock reading 3:46 pm.

19 **INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER** 19

PUSH INTO Joey's bathroom door, which is closed, the shower can be heard running.

In the dream, Joey checks the time after his shower routine. It's 4:00 pm. He opens the door --

The door gives way. He emerges from the bathroom. He enters his room, realizing that his dreams have foreshadowed all the events of today. He gasps, growing increasingly paranoid...

20 **INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT** 20

He covers himself in bed, falling deeper into sleep.

In the dream, he is inside the driver's seat, his car parked outside of school. He hops out the car, walking across the parking lot then suddenly -- BLACK. Like a TV screen losing power.

21 **INT. BEDROOM - MORNING** 21

He JUMPS, lurching forward -- waking up from a nightmare. PUSH INTO his face, as he considers the meaning of his dreams...

22 **INT. JOEY'S CAR (PARKING LOT) - LATER** 22

Joey sits at the driver's seat, looking at the exterior of the school, just like how the dream foretold. He waits a beat. He sighs, unlocking the door, hopping out --

But he doesn't cross the street, he looks around, waiting for a sign... for anything -- SCREEEEEEEECHHHHH! A car ZOOMS PAST, going easily 40 mph down the parking lot.

Joey GASPS, shocked.

 JOEY
 (to himself)
 Holy shit.

He realizes that he would've died, if he crossed the road. The dream foretold his **death**. He takes out his inhaler and brings it up to his mouth... PUFF.

23 **OVER BLACK** 23

ONE MONTH LATER

24 **EXT. SHOPPING PLAZA - AFTERNOON**

24

The group of four sits where they sat prior to their first hangout. Layla is on her phone, seeing something --

LAYLA

Oh yeah... I found this abandoned place on Lotus Lane that we could check out this Friday. We can maybe camp out there.

NATHAN

Sounds dope.

ERICA

We haven't explored anywhere recently.

Joey stares at his shoes underneath the table.

LAYLA

Would you be free Joey?

He looks up to his friends, he nods, smiling.

JOEY

Yeah. I will.

LAYLA

Perfect!

25 **INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT**

25

SUPER-TITLE: Thursday night.

Joey settles into bed, closing his eyes.

26 **EXT. LOTUS LANE - EVENING (DREAM-SPACE)**

26

It's getting dark out, Nathan, Layla, and Erica are all smiles. They explore deeper into the area.

After more visions of fun, we can hear something approaching behind the group... TIRES. Whip pan towards the noise -- but before we can see anything... BLACK. All we can hear is dialogue.

JOEY (O.S.)

Hey. Stop following us. I mean it.

AGGRESSIVE VOICE (O.S.)

What're you gonna do about it?

JOEY (O.S.)
Back up. Back up!

LAYLA (O.S.)
Get away from him!

WHACK. THUD. Someone is hit in the face, and has collapsed onto the concrete floor.

27 **INT. BEDROOM - MORNING**

27

Joey SCATTERS, jumping up, now awake. He takes deep, heavy breaths.

28 **EXT. PARKING LOT - LATER**

28

Joey turns to his friends, who are all staring at him with concern.

JOEY
-- I'm saying that we shouldn't go.

LAYLA
You can just say that you don't want to go, we're fine with it.

JOEY
No... I just don't think any of us should go there.

NATHAN
Is everything alright?

JOEY
Yes! Why won't you guys listen to me?

LAYLA
Don't get mad.

JOEY
I'm not getting mad! Why are you guys pushing this on me, I'm just saying we should go somewhere else. Lotus Lane is around a bad part of town... I feel like something bad is gonna happen.

ERICA
Well, we're still going to be going around that area, just for a little bit.

JOEY

You guys aren't listening to me.

His eyebrows tense in frustration --

LAYLA

I don't understand why you're sulking.

JOEY

(seeming more ignorant)

I'm not.

NATHAN

Listen, Joey, we don't want you to feel left out--

JOEY

I'm not. I'm not feeling "left out." I just need you guys to listen to me.

LAYLA

This is going nowhere.

She walks towards the entrance of the school, exiting the conversation.

NATHAN

(calling after her)

Layla!

Nathan catches up to her. Erica looks at Joey one last time, before exiting as well. Joey stares ahead, watching his friends walk further and further away.

29 **INT. BEDROOM - AFTERNOON**

29

4:00 pm. Joey settles into his bed, about to take a nap. He closes his eyes, tapping into the *dream-space*.

30 **EXT. LOTUS LANE - EVENING (DREAM-SPACE)**

30

Running... tracking up towards two figures... Erica and Layla, squatting over someone on the ground... IT'S NATHAN. Blood pools onto the concrete. He must've collided with the ground, HARD.

Layla and Erica cry for help.

31

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

31

Joey comes to, awake. He stands up, going to his desk, clearing all the excess papers... he puts a fresh piece of paper on the desk, and he writes onto it. It's a diagram, he draws a flat horizontal line.

He draws a vertical line onto the y-axis. He labels it:
"Arrive to Lotus Lane"

He draws another: **"Explore"**

Another after that -- **"Someone arrives close-by"**

-- **"I die."**

JOEY
 But if I'm not there...

He pauses, drawing an arrow to another HORIZONTAL LINE, reading: **"Nathan dies."**

JOEY (CONT'D)
 What time? Damnit...

He sits down on his chair...

JOEY (CONT'D)
 Shit... shit...

An idea pops into his head. He closes his eyes... trying to enter the dream-space...

32

EXT. LOTUS LANE - EVENING (DREAM-SPACE)

32

After hopping out the car, he looks around, seeing Layla and Erica (kneeling beside Nathan's dying body) in the distance. He reaches into his pocket, pulling out his CELLPHONE -- the time reads 5:47 pm.

33

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

33

He wakes up, marking the time: **"5:47 pm."** next to the line:
"Nathan dies."

Joey looks at the paper, clocking all of the data... he thinks to himself.

JOEY
 I gotta get there before it happens. When did I get there initially?

He closes his eyes, thinking...

34 **INT. JOEY'S CAR (MOVING) - AFTERNOON (DREAM-SPACE)** 34

Joey looks at the time as he drives. The time reads: 5:32 pm.

35 **INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS** 35

Waking up again, he turns to his bed-side clock -- **5:27 pm.**

JOEY

Shit!

He RUNS -- booking it out of his bedroom.

36 **EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS** 36

And into the driveway of his house, he hops into his parked car -- starts it up, drives OUT OF THERE --

37 **EXT. LOTUS LANE - MOMENTS LATER** 37

He pulls into the abandoned area, he parks nearby, out of sight.

38 **INT. JOEY'S CAR - SAME TIME** 38

He peeks out the windshield, seeing that his friends are in the distance, checking out the area. He looks around for any more clues... anything...

That black sedan we've seen earlier, pulls into the lot. Joey looks ahead -- realizing --

39 **EXT. LOTUS LANE - SAME TIME** 39

Nathan peeks over to the black sedan, which has now parked nearby. Three people exit the car, they are: Matthew Boyd, James Page, and Sebastian Klein (all 18).

Erica and Layla haven't noticed yet.

NATHAN

Guys...

They peek up, their smiles FADING once they see the three.

40

INT. JOEY'S CAR - SAME TIME

40

He watches as the three boys exit the car. They approach his friends...

JOEY

Oh shit...

He thinks... gets an idea... he closes his eyes -- thinking --

41

EXT. LOTUS LANE - CONTINUOUS (DREAM-SPACE)

41

Matthew is the one to sock Nathan THREE TIMES in the face, making him collapse onto the concrete floor, HARD. Joey runs up towards Matthew, TACKLING him towards the floor --

Joey gets up, trying to fight the other two. James swings first, it lands on Joey's cheek. CRACK. Sebastian swings. CRACK. Joey collapses, taking heavy blows while on the ground. He turns to his right... seeing a ROCK on the ground--

42

EXT. LOTUS LANE - SAME TIME (REAL-LIFE)

42

MATTHEW

It's about time we had a discussion, Layla.

Nathan walks towards the three boys.

NATHAN

Listen, she wants nothing to do with you guys.

MATTHEW

I'm not talking to you, faggoty prick. What're you doing with her? Did you wanted to get laid that badly?

Nathan pushes Matthew away.

NATHAN

I said, get away.

WHACK -- Matthew socks Nathan in the face.

MATTHEW

I said, keep your hands off me. Prick.

LAYLA

No! Get away from him!

She tries pushing him away before he can attack Nathan again. Matthew pushes her away, about to swing AGAIN --

As his arm extends towards Nathan's face, we enter SLOW-MOTION...

WIDEN TO REVEAL -- Joey running towards Matthew, RAMMING him (not tackling, as shown in the dream) onto the floor. Time returns to normal speed.

James and Sebastian look up at Joey, surprised.

Nathan is on the ground, nose bleeding, but still alive. Erica and Layla help him off the ground, also surprised that Joey's here.

JOEY
(to his friends)
My car. Now.

Without question, they guide Nathan towards Joey's car. They enter. Joey turns back to the three. He assumes a fighting stance.

MATTHEW
And who the hell are you?

James and Sebastian giggle as they observe Joey. James shrugs, and exactly like the dream, he ATTACKS FIRST. Joey, knowing this was coming, slips past it, shoulder checks him onto the floor.

Sebastian attacks second, Joey parries the hook, and delivers a jab to his face. Matthew picks himself off the ground -- Joey didn't see this coming, as he's RAMMED onto the floor by him --

Joey groans, catching sight of the rock -- he picks it off the floor, swinging it towards Matthew's face, but he backs away before it can land.

Joey and the three bullies are now at a distance, and they face each other off like samurai in a Kurosawa flick. Joey takes deep breaths, gathering himself. He closes his eyes -- thinking --

In the dream, Joey attacks first, running up towards the three, he is taken down easily, disarmed, beaten on the floor--

44

EXT. LOTUS LANE - SAME (REAL-TIME)

44

Joey opens his eyes, now understanding *what not to do*. He holds the rock, waiting for them to attack. James runs up, Joey dodges his attacks, but misses the rock-swing, the rock is disarmed by Seb --

Joey takes down James and thrashes him into Seb -- before Matthew can hit -- Joey picks up the rock from the ground, and swings it right in the RIB -- CRACK --

Matthew HOLLERS -- and is brought to the floor. Seb and James pick him up --

JAMES

Shit -- let's go!

They practically drag Matthew back into his car -- and they drive off.

Joey stands there, still presuming a fighting stance, waiting for them to fully exit the premises. Once he realizes danger is fully gone, he drops to the floor --

His friends run up to him --

LAYLA

Joey! Joey I'm so sorry... I'm sorry.

Joey wheezes... FADING OUT --

JOEY

I... I-inhaler...

LAYLA

Erica! Grab his inhaler!

Erica rushes to the car, searching the cupholders for it -- Layla and Nathan pick Joey up, helping him off the ground -- he closes his eyes --

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

45

EXT. THE PARK - AFTERNOON (DREAM-SPACE)

45

Close-ups of his friends, all ALIVE, smiling. They look at us, at Joey.

46

EXT. JOEY'S CAR (MOVING) - EVENING (REAL-TIME)

46

Joey's now in the backseat. Nathan sleeps beside him, resting his head on Joey's shoulder. Joey looks around, coming to... he looks out, seeing the lights and lamp-posts pass by...

JOEY (V.O.)

When I was seven, I told my Mom I
wanted to save the world. Though
that's a bit of a stretch, I saved
my world, and that's all that
matters.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE:

THE INSOMNIAC

47

CREDITS.

47

THE END.