

SPOON-FED ADDICTION

by

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Based on the novella by Silvano Williams

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INT. ANGELA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Moonlight cuts across the room.

A stuffed rabbit sits propped against the pillows. One ear is coming loose from the seam.

On the wall: a BEAUTY AND THE BEAST poster. Belle and the Beast mid-dance, her yellow dress swirling. A fairy tale promise.

On the desk: a SKETCHBOOK lies closed, edges worn from use. Beside it, a stack of COLLEGE BROCHURES, University of Houston on top.

A desk CALENDAR shows December 1995. Its surface is furred with dust.

A purple diary sits CLOSED on the calendar.

Something in the corners of the room moves. The faint shadows cast by the moonlight darken.

Darkness bleeds in. It slides across the floor, pools beneath the desk chair, then rises over the chair's legs like strands of fabric extending from the rug.

It takes the shape of a body sitting in the chair: SHADOW-ANGELA.

She holds the same posture Angela used to hold, but her outline won't stay still. Her features soften and reform, a collage of photographs flashing in and out of focus within the shadow's form.

The diary OPENS on its own. The pages flutter, then settle on a water-stained entry.

Shadow-Angela's hand moves across the page as if she's writing, tracing over the words already written.

INSERT - DIARY PAGE

Faded ink on a water-stained page: "December 20, 1995. Dear Diary, "

Shadow-Angela's hand pauses. Her dark form turns toward the diary as if reading what she's written.

It isn't remembering. It's summoning.

Angela's voice rises from the walls and echoes from the ceiling, filling the emptiness in the room.

ANGELA (V.O.)

I have found love, and his name is Adiran. Adiran, who told me he had heard God... that he deserved to die, and I didn't believe him until it was too late.

The diary pages turn backward. They flutter through entries, like portals through time.

An earlier entry catches the light: "September 3rd, 1995. Sent off my application to U of H's art program today. Dad says it's not practical. Jessica says follow your heart. For once, I think she might be right!"

The shadow touches the page.

The diary projects the memory into the room:

INT. HIGH SCHOOL ART ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Late afternoon yellow light pours through tall windows.

ANGELA STERLING (18, small-framed, paint under her fingernails) stands before an easel, brush in hand.

She's SMILING, genuinely and unguarded as a half-finished painting of a bird in flight takes shape under her brush.

A FRIEND (17) leans over her shoulder, pointing at the canvas.

FRIEND

That's very good, Angie. For real!

Angela laughs, slightly embarrassed. She steps back and studies the painting.

Her embarrassed smile settles into something genuine.

The memory flashes away into a yellow flare.

INT. STERLING KITCHEN - EVENING (FLASHBACK)

Another diary page: November 23, 1995.

A Christmas photo clings to the fridge: a much younger Sterling family. Mr. and Mrs. Sterling stand in the back row, holding each other. The two girls stand shoulder-to-shoulder in front. All smiles. Angela is missing some teeth.

SHERIFF STERLING (late 40s, thick-built, carries his star like a weapon) paces the kitchen floor. The badge shimmers as

it catches the yellow kitchen light.

He slams a newspaper onto the kitchen table. The front page carries a grainy photo of Sheriff Sterling, his face frozen mid-yell at a crowd of reporters.

"Corruption" and "Under Investigation" darken under the light. Shadows trace the letters and leap out from the bold text.

The family portrait smiles from the fridge.

Sheriff Sterling looms over the table, grinding a piece of licorice candy between his teeth.

SHERIFF STERLING
You want to explain this?

Angela stands behind a kitchen chair opposite him. Hands tight on the backrest. Face blank.

JESSICA STERLING (early 20s, hair dyed unevenly, doesn't live here anymore) enters from the hallway, arms crossed, her denim coat folded over them.

JESSICA
Jesus Christ. She's still a kid. She doesn't know what she's doing!

Sterling turns toward Jessica, pointing. Voice rising.

SHERIFF STERLING
You brought that scumbag into our home. And look where we are!

He slaps the paper again. The table jolts. The room darkens.

Jessica's breath catches. But her stare doesn't drop.

JESSICA
Yeah, sure, Daddy. You've preached accountability your whole life. And now the world finally sees you like I do. Like the fucking hypocrite you are!

Unseen by anyone, the shadows spread across the kitchen floor toward Jessica.

They slide across the tile like black water, pooling toward Jessica's feet.

Sterling lunges toward Jessica. He grabs the nearest chair

and shoves it out of his way. The shadow water on the floor parts as the legs screech across the tile.

Jessica steps back from her father's aggression. Her shoulder hits the doorframe hard.

Her foot shifts as she turns away, exposing her ankle. A tendril of shadow water reaches up and brushes her bare ankle. It recoils and vanishes with a hiss.

SHERIFF STERLING
Don't you walk away from me!

But Jessica already has. She stumbles away, sobbing.

JESSICA (O.S.)
Happy fucking Thanksgiving!

The front door opens. SLAMS shut.

The Christmas photo on the fridge flutters from the slam. It comes loose and drifts to the shadow water on the floor.

ANGELA (V.O.)
My sister escaped, leaving me, while
everyone turned against me for
defending Adiran.

The photo shrivels, corners curling in, the colors bleeding out of it.

Sterling's fingers close around the photo. Black water drips from his hand, seeping from the edges as his grip tightens.

He turns to Angela. Slowly bends over the table, looming into her space. Threatening enough that she flinches.

SHERIFF STERLING
(low)
This is ALL your fault!

He holds the crumpled ball inches from her face. Flicks it at her chest.

It bounces off, falls to the floor.

Where it touched her, the darkness soaks into the fabric like water. By the time she looks down, it's gone.

Angela releases the chair. Her face tightens with rage.

She shouts at the top of her lungs.

ANGELA
Like I give a shit!

Sterling's hand comes up fast and practiced.

Angela is silenced.

At the kitchen counter, MRS. STERLING (late 40s, thin, never makes eye contact) methodically carves the turkey beside four waiting dishes.

Shadows cling to her like a second skin. They move when she moves. She doesn't notice them anymore. Nothing left in her to notice.

Shadows bleed in from the edges. The room goes dark.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Another diary page: November 27, 1995. It erupts into a projection.

Angela strides past lockers.

Harsh fluorescent lights hum above her. They expose the bad makeup job covering the red on her cheek.

ANGELA (V.O.)
Back to school Monday... The weekend
passed the way weekends always pass in
our house... in silent fear of
confrontation.

Kids line both sides. Some work at their lockers. Others stare, point, and whisper behind her back.

Footsteps echo behind her.

Each step leaves a dark footprint behind her, lingering on the tile like mud. None of the kids notice.

STUDENTS (O.S.)
"That's her." "With him?" "Didn't he
kill a bunch of people?"

Snickers ripple through the crowd. A guy mutters:

GUY (O.S.)
Fucking psycho bait!

A group of kids roughhouses nearby.

The shadows spread outward from the footprints, engulfing the

lockers and the kids on either side.

A locker door SLAMS.

INT. ANGELA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Shadow-Angela stills. The diary lies open as its pages settle.

A glimpse on a page: "Maybe everyone has a beast inside them. Maybe love is what sets them free."

Her dark hand hovers over the line. Lingers, absorbing the words.

The shadows on the ceiling blacken. Stretch toward the window. Drape over it until they cover the window in total darkness.

Then the soft sound of pages turning again as a fog-like memory emerges:

INT. ANGELA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Angela stands at the window. Her breath hitches.

A figure is outside, backlit by streetlight.

Angela opens the window. She steps back.

ADIRAN (20, towering, sharp-tongued dealer) silently climbs through the window. Only his outline is visible, eyes gleaming unnaturally.

ADIRAN

God does not want me alive, Angie, so
I am going to make sure I go to Hell
when I die.

Angela says nothing. His hand emerges from the dark and wipes a tear from her cheek. His other hand rests at her waist, then trails up her back.

Her breath catches. He tenderly pulls her closer.

He kisses her. She reciprocates.

ANGELA (V.O.)

For the first time, I felt like I was
good enough for someone.

Adiran takes her shaking hands in his.

Adiran pulls back from the kiss.

Hot breath on her cheek, then her ear.

ADIRAN

I love you.

Angela cries.

ANGELA (V.O.)

That was all I ever wanted.

He pulls away. She reaches after him. He slips out the window.

She falls to her knees, dragging her diary to the floor with her.

He looks back, almost obscured by the dark. Yet a tear sliding down his cheek catches the light.

ANGELA (V.O.)

Before Adiran told me he loved me, I
had a purpose. Then they took him, and
life itself lost its meaning.

As the memory fades, the diary pages flutter forward to the final entry.

INT. ANGELA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Angela lies in bed. Diary clutched to her chest, pen loose in her hand.

The pen slips from her fingers. Falls to the floor.

ANGELA (V.O.)

Finally, I've understood what his god
had said to him. It's been two months
since Adiran was taken from me. It's
been two months of wanting him more
than anything else in my life.

The shadows above her begin to stir, unfolding downward from the ceiling and walls with each breath she takes.

ANGELA (V.O.)

But I know they can't ever stop my
Adiran. On some nights, I hear him
calling for me. I want to touch him
again, so I whisper to him in the
dark, hoping he sees me in his dreams.
I've felt him, and I know he comes to
(MORE)

ANGELA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
me because I am the only one!

A woman's silhouette forms. Her arms spread. The edges of her arms trail off like wings drawn in smoke.

ANGELA (V.O.)
On those nights, he breathes into my
ear, and sometimes around my neck and
down my back. Warm, comforting
whispers that assure me that when I
die, I will be with him.

The shape swells as it takes a deep breath in. Then folds inward until it collapses.

The shadow reforms. This time with broader shoulders. Adiran's outline, but no facial features. The shadow wears what she wants to see.

ANGELA (V.O.)
Because with Adiran's help, I know
I'll be able to come back just as he
does for me. Whether it'll be in
Heaven or Hell, it doesn't matter
anymore.

Angela doesn't move. The shadow takes the form of Adiran's face leaning down, just like their first kiss.

Its mouth moves past hers and brushes her ear.

ADIRAN
(distorted, reverberating)
Breathe.

Angela inhales. Sharp and deep.

Her eyes WIDEN in anticipation. A bright yellow light reflects off them.

But something is wrong.

She tries to exhale. She can't. Her hands fly to her throat.

The shadows TIGHTEN around her neck.

Her back arches off the mattress. Fighting for air that won't come. Her fingers claw at the darkness. They pass through nothing.

ANGELA (V.O.)
All that matters now is that I will
(MORE)

ANGELA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
escape this horrible, pointless life
and finally be happy.

Then, stillness. Her eyes stay open. Glassy. Gone. A single tear slides down her temple.

The shadow pulls back from her face. It holds Adiran's shape for a moment.

It dissolves, sliding off the bed, its umbra pooling in the corners of her room.

The diary slips from her fingers. Falls open on the floor. Its pages flutter, then settle on the last page.

Her handwriting catches the moonlight:

ANGELA (V.O.)
(whispered)
No more tears. I have cried enough.
Goodbye, Angela Sterling.

INT. ANGELA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Moonlight cuts across the room.

Total silence of an empty house.

The room has reset. The bed is made. The chair at the desk is empty. The only thing out of place is the open diary on the desk.

Shadows trace the letters, waiting.

The page holds.

Darkness surges off the page past the room. Consumes everything in black.

WATER ROARS: a ruptured pipe and a bathtub faucet, their sounds merging into white noise.

ADIRAN (V.O.)
(distorted, reverberating)
What she knew of me is what I fed her.

Because watching eyes widen with
fascination is easier than admitting I
have nothing real to give.

INT. ADIRAN'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Steam fogs the bathroom mirror.

A low HUM begins vibrating the glass.

Handwritten words form: "SPOON-FED ADDICTION".

Blood sweats from the mirror.

A handprint smears the blood from the other side.

The hum rises in pitch until the mirror shatters.

The bathroom is wrecked. The mirror is obliterated, tiles are cracked.

The sink has been ripped from the wall. Pipes are exposed, water spraying across the bathroom.

Cabinet doors are splintered. A bullet hole in the drywall.

The water spray slows. The hum fades.

A police radio crackles faintly:

POLICE RADIO (O.S.)
Suspect may be armed... Request backup
at location...

Adiran lies motionless in the tub.

Blood swirls in the water. Spreads across the linoleum. In the corners, the dark drinks it in.

The scattered mirror shards on the floor catch the light. Each holds a fragment of Adiran's face. An eye. His jaw. His forehead.

Adiran slumps back against the tub.

His cracked lips part.

ADIRAN
(forcing it)
Whatever... is in me...

His throat closes. He swallows against dry nothing. His lips stop moving.

ADIRAN (V.O.)
...it dies with me tonight.