

Knock, Knock

written by Claire Louise Huder

Cinder Pictures, LLC
cinderpictures@gmail.com
www.clairelouisehuder.com/cinder-pictures

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KNOCK, KNOCK.

INT. APARTMENT - MORNING

Close-up MONTAGE of a YOUNG MAN (20s-30s) getting ready; ref: 'Dexter' Intro.

KNOCK, KNOCK.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

SUNLIGHT shines through a WINDOW into a sparsely-decorated BEDROOM. A YOUNG MAN (20s-30s) sits on the EDGE of a BED in the CENTER of the room, alone and motionless, with his FEET flat on the FLOOR. His HANDS are clasped in front of him while his ELBOWS rest on his LEGS. He stares ahead, unblinking, beyond the BEDROOM WALL in front of him.

KNOCK, KNOCK.

A YOUNG WOMAN (20s-30s) stands in the BEDROOM DOORWAY with a soft smile, having just knocked. The YOUNG MAN reacts slowly, at last breaking his straightforward stare as he lifts his HEAD to look at the YOUNG WOMAN. The moment he sees her, it takes a brief moment for the YOUNG MAN to register her presence but, once he does, a switch flips and he smiles, immediately more animated. She is the most beautiful thing he has ever seen.

YOUNG WOMAN

Hey.

YOUNG MAN

Hey.

YOUNG WOMAN

Where were you just now?

YOUNG MAN

What do you mean?

The YOUNG WOMAN walks over to him.

YOUNG WOMAN

You were here, but you weren't here.

She stands in front of the YOUNG MAN and lowers herself to just below his level, balancing on her FEET.

YOUNG WOMAN

Where were you?

The YOUNG WOMAN grasps the YOUNG MAN's HANDS in her own while she looks up into his EYES. The YOUNG MAN looks back into her EYES, and while hers shine brightly and confidently, his flicker with doubt and uncertainty.

KNOCK, KNOCK.

YOUNG MAN
Sorry, I don't know. I'm here now,
though.

The YOUNG WOMAN smiles.

YOUNG WOMAN
Well, that's the important thing.

She stands and reaches out with an OPEN PALM.

YOUNG WOMAN (CONT'D)
Are you ready to go?

The YOUNG MAN looks over to the BEDROOM DOORWAY, where he sees a STUFFED BACKPACK sitting on the floor and propping open the BEDROOM DOOR.

KNOCK, KNOCK.

He stands silently and without taking the YOUNG WOMAN's HAND, calmly walking over to the STUFFED BACKPACK. He picks it up gently, cradling it, before putting it on with care. The YOUNG WOMAN remains standing by the FOOT of the BED, waiting patiently and watching the YOUNG MAN with a pitied smile. He turns to face her once more and dons a loving smile.

YOUNG MAN
Yes, I'm ready.

The YOUNG WOMAN reaches out her HAND again to beckon him forward. Accepting her invitation, the YOUNG MAN takes a step forward...

HARD CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The YOUNG MAN is walking in the FOREST, looking straight ahead as his feet CRUNCH one-by-one on the forest floor. Another EVEN CRUNCH can be heard nearby, at the same volume. Just a few meters ahead is the YOUNG WOMAN, walking with her BACK to him. She looks back briefly at the YOUNG MAN and smiles before turning to look in front of her.

KNOCK, KNOCK.

The YOUNG MAN continues to watch the YOUNG WOMAN as he walks behind her at a growing distance. His body is present, but his mind is again adrift, just as before. He looks down at his HANDS as he continues to walk and the forest CRUNCHES beneath his FEET. The YOUNG WOMAN's STEPS continue to CRUNCH lightly ahead of him.

The YOUNG MAN looks back up to see the YOUNG WOMAN still walking in front with her BACK to him, but she is now twice as far away as before. Despite her distance, the YOUNG WOMAN's STEPS continue to CRUNCH just as loudly as before and at the same even pace. She does not turn around.

KNOCK, KNOCK.

As he walks, the YOUNG MAN reaches up with his HANDS and grasps both of the BACKPACK STRAPS, clutching them tightly. He looks to his LEFT and sees nothing but FOREST. He looks to his RIGHT and again sees nothing but FOREST. He looks up at the SKY, so clear and blue through the TREES. His STEPS continue to CRUNCH loudly as he walks. However, no other steps accompany them.

KNOCK, KNOCK.

The YOUNG MAN looks ahead to find that the YOUNG WOMAN has vanished. He continues to trudge forward, straining his EYES to see the BACK or HAIR of the YOUNG WOMAN past a far tree, but she does not appear. The YOUNG MAN halts in his tracks. He keeps looking straight ahead, as if expecting her to re-materialize out of thin air back in front of him; she does not.

His face dons a look of worry. Where has she gone? His breath begins to quicken as panic rises in his gut. He must not lose her. The YOUNG MAN resumes walking straight ahead, but at a quicker pace than before.

KNOCK, KNOCK.

A STURDY TREE with a WIDE TRUNK obstructs his path ahead, and the YOUNG MAN walks briskly up to it. Standing straight and still in front of it, he attempts to take a DEEP, SETTLING BREATH. He reaches up with ONE HAND and reaches forward in order to use it to...

HARD CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT FRONT DOOR - DAY

(YOUNG MAN's POV)

...knock on a nondescript APARTMENT DOOR.

KNOCK, KNOCK.

After a brief PAUSE and some RUSTLING, a FEW STEPS are heard approaching from the other side. The APARTMENT DOOR opens to reveal the YOUNG WOMAN, smiling brightly. The moment she recognizes the person in front of her, her smile immediately drops and her EYES flash wide in FEAR. Suddenly, she jolts as if struck by something, and her MOUTH fills with BLOOD. She opens her LIPS in a grimace of PAIN, spilling the BLOOD down her CHIN.

(UNSEEN) The YOUNG MAN has stabbed her in the STOMACH.
(END POV)

The YOUNG MAN smiles widely and regards his prize with a look of love and appreciation. After all that time admiring her from afar, his "true love"--the sole subject of his obsession--is finally his, and he will never let her go. As the YOUNG WOMAN begins to collapse, the YOUNG MAN wraps his FREE ARM around her WAIST to support her and takes a step forward, taking her with him back into the apartment and shutting the APARTMENT DOOR behind them.

HARD CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - DAY

The YOUNG MAN walks again at a steady pace, heading straight ahead, deeper into the forest. His footsteps CRUNCH on the forest floor. Another set of footsteps begins to CRUNCH alongside his at the same steady pace. He looks to his side. The YOUNG WOMAN is walking directly beside him. She turns her HEAD to look at him and smiles lovingly. She reaches with her ARM and securely grasps the YOUNG MAN'S HAND. He holds her HAND in his and smiles back.

The YOUNG MAN looks forward, still smiling. He is walking alone. The HAND that was just holding the YOUNG WOMAN'S HAND is now securely grasping the STRAP of the STUFFED BACKPACK, which has a noticeable DARK RED STAIN all over the bottom of it. The YOUNG MAN continues to walk ahead, disappearing deep into the forest.

KNOCK, KNOCK. DARKNESS.

THE END.