

RED NAVEL

Written by

Adam Korenman
And
Sam Khushal

INT. DETECTIVE WAITING ROOM.

Establishing shot of cheap Detective sign on the door.

INT. DETECTIVE OFFICE.

Detective DREB FRANKLIN, P.I., sits at his desk munching on a weird fruit. He stares off and has an internal/external monologue.

DETECTIVE

It was another hot summer day, the kind that lingers like a bad house guest. The stink of my last client's cigarette sank into the carpet of my rented office. Another reprobate who couldn't pay. I needed money like a hairdresser needs gossip, and pickings were slim in good old Hollywierd.

SFX: BUZZ!

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)

I never liked the buzzer. Not the tone, that was fine enough. Get's my attention when my thoughts grow rowdy. It was the finger on the other end of that intercom that got to me.

ASSISTANT

Detective Franklin.

DETECTIVE

There are bad assistants, and then there are bad assistants. Then there's eight miles of crap. Then there's my David.

ASSISTANT

I'm sending her in.

Silhouette on the door. The client, SCARLET, enters. She tries to be seductive, leaning on the table, but slips and falls. The detective doesn't react.

DETECTIVE

Careful, just had the floor waxed.

SCARLET

I hear you're the man to see about lost causes.

DETECTIVE

I needed a killer opening line.

(beat)

Yeah.

Scarlet is nonplussed.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)

She looked clean like a gas station bathroom, but who was I to judge? She had a wallet and I had bills.

SCARLET

Excuse me?

DETECTIVE

What brings you in, sweet thing? If you're looking for the man who broke your heart, he's sitting right in front of you.

SCARLET

Something's been taken from me. A priceless heirloom, it's been in the family for years. My mother's Red Navel. I need the Red Navel for her funeral.

DETECTIVE

And what is that?

SCARLET

A ceremony for putting the dead in the ground. What, have you never been to a funeral before?

(beat)

(MORE)

SCARLET (CONT'D)

I have to go settle her affairs, but please come by my home as soon as possible. I think someone there may have been involved.

Scarlet walks toward the exit.

DETECTIVE

I watched her go. She was as graceful as she was beautiful.

Scarlet slips on the loose carpet and faceplants. She gets up and leaves. The detective goes to his assistant's desk.

ASSISTANT

I've lived next to her family my whole life. They're a bunch of spoiled rich bastards.
(beat)
But their money's good. So what is she looking for?

DETECTIVE

Something called a Red Navel.

ASSISTANT

What's that?

DETECTIVE

Do a search.

The assistant types on the computer.

ASSISTANT

(shocked)

Oh my. A sexual act performed, often in an arena, including but not limited to a herd of --

The detective SLAPS his assistant.

DETECTIVE

Kiss your mother with that mouth?
(beat)
Is that the best you can find?

ASSISTANT

Or it's an orange. The cara cara.

DETECTIVE

An orange. Why'd it have to be an orange.

The assistant looks at his boss quizzically.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)

I mean, who picks an heirloom with such a short shelf life?

Detective grabs his coat.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)

Road snack?

The assistant holds up a pineapple. The detective grabs it and heads out the door.

INT. CLIENT'S HOUSE.

A fancy shmancy kitchen. The detective and Scarlet go to the scene of the crime, near a safe. A Russian AU PAIR cleans the dishes suspiciously. The detective is eating the pineapple like an apple and tosses it aside, half finished.

DETECTIVE

This was the kind of house old money buys. The kind of cash you get from winning the lottery. One of the big ones you split with ten people before taxes, and still have enough to leave a steamer on your boss's desk.

SCARLET

Sorry, are you talking to me?

DETECTIVE

Where was this heirloom last?

SCARLET

I always keep it in the safe in the kitchen.
You can question the Au Pair first.

DETECTIVE

Oh, you have kids?

SCARLET

No.

(beat)

Excuse me while I change into something
more comfortable.

Scarlet exits. The detective approaches the Au Pair.

DETECTIVE

Why don't you tell me your part in the Red
Navel business?

SLAP.

AU PAIR

Kiss your mother with that mouth?

DETECTIVE

Don't be cute, commie. You know what I
mean.

AU PAIR

The heirloom? I wouldn't touch something
that hot. Too dangerous to move. I only
deal in outdated electronics.

The au pair reveals a small television hidden in her beneath her skirt.

SFX: Comical POP

AU PAIR (CONT'D)

It's practically community service.

(beat)

Besides, that went missing after the old woman died. Not my work.

Scarlet reappears, dressed seductively.

SCARLET

What did I miss?

DETECTIVE

She's dirty all right.

Scarlet smiles.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)

But not for this crime. It's a bum lead.

Who else has had access?

SCARLET

The caterer has been moving in and out.

Here he comes. Grill him, I need to check with the pyrotechnician.

Scarlet walks off. LES BOOTLEY, the caterer, appears carrying a crate. He has a name tag that reads "Les" on his forehead.

DETECTIVE

Hello, Les.

LES

How'd you know my name?

Detective squints at the name tag.

DETECTIVE

...Intuition. Are those oranges?

The caterer sets the crate down. He lifts a GRAPEFRUIT.

CATERER

No, it's grapefruit. What, you've never been to a funeral before? If it's oranges you're keen on, you need to talk to my boss. I'm just a sub-contractor, but Emelio specializes in...the exotic fruits.

DETECTIVE

Where can I find him?

CATERER

You know the old field? Outskirts of town. You can't miss it. Now, if you don't mind, I need to get these filled with vodka.

Scarlet appears, out of breath.

SCARLET

Where to next, detective?

DETECTIVE

Time to take this show on the road.

SCARLET

I'll ride with you.

DETECTIVE

If you think it's safe. My ride's outside.

EXT. HOUSE, STREET.

A fancy car is parked in the driveway.

SCARLET

Is that beauty yours?

DETECTIVE

Too obvious. Mine's on the right.

A sturdy sedan sits nearby.

SCARLET
Ooh. Responsible. I like it.

DETECTIVE
Wrong again, sweetheart.

The detective points to a SKATEBOARD sitting on the curb. Scarlet is disturbed.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)
Hold on tight. The brakes are a little loose.

EXT. STREET.

Scarlet and the detective roll by on the Skateboard.

DETECTIVE
The scent of her hair was intoxicating.
Enough I worried about getting pulled over.

SCARLET
Are you talking to me?

DETECTIVE
I said you use too much perfume.

EXT. FIELD.

A blank field. A VENDOR, Emelio, stands by peddling his wares. As they approach, the detective steps off the skateboard. Scarlet doesn't know how to stop and keeps rolling away. He munches on another weird fruit, tossing it over his shoulder.

SFX: CRASH.

DETECTIVE
The supplier was as shady as an orange
grove. I tried to place his ethnicity.

EMELIO
If it helps, I'm...

DETECTIVE

Don't spoon feed me. I'm a detective.

EMELIO

I hear you're in the market for some citrus. I have...everything.

DETECTIVE

So you deal in Red Navels?

SLAP.

EMELIO

Kiss your mother with that mouth?

(beat)

I can set you up with a clementine.

(swaps orange)

Maybe a Bergamot?

(swaps orange)

Or perhaps you want a Nanshodaikai?

The detective grabs Emelio by the collar.

DETECTIVE

Cut the botanist act, scumbag. I'm looking for a stolen Cara Cara. Belonged to the nice lady with the dead mom.

EMELIO

That red navel? You must be in some real trouble.

DETECTIVE

Tell me something I don't know.

EMELIO

Most toilets flush in E Flat.

DETECTIVE

I don't have time for potty humor. Where's the fruit?

EMELIO
(drops accent)
I don't mess with that breed. I don't know
anyone who would.

The detective lets him go. Scarlet approaches carrying the skateboard.
She looks disheveled, with sticks in her hair.

SCARLET
Detective?

DETECTIVE
Dead end, toots. I'm sorry, the trail is cold.

SCARLET
I need that heirloom. The funeral is
tomorrow.

DETECTIVE
Surely you could just buy a new one?

SCARLET
It's priceless. And it's Scarlet.
(beat)
You're on your own from here. But let me
be clear. If you don't have something to
show by tonight, you're not getting one
cent from me. Now I have to go back
home to deal with the DJ.

DETECTIVE
A DJ?

SCARLET
What, have you never been to a funeral
before?

Scarlet drops the board and stumbles off.

DETECTIVE
And there she went, out of my life again. I
could have let it end there, in that field.
(MORE)

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)

But I needed that money. My luck with the horses hadn't been great lately.

EMELIO

So...are you going to buy something?

The detective walks off. Emelio pulls out his phone.

EMELIO (CONT'D)

It's me. I may have an interested party.

EXT. ALLEY.

The detective walks past a dark alley, deep in thought. He munches on a new fruit.

DETECTIVE

I was out of clues, and out of daylight.
How was I supposed to find something that
just wasn't...

A figure appears in the shadows.

FEMME FATALE

I hear you're looking for--

DETECTIVE

Excuse me, I'm finishing a thought.

The figure pauses.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)

...there.

(beat)

Who are you?

FEMME FATALE

A friend of friend. I hear you're looking
for something special.

DETECTIVE

The red navel?

SLAP.

FEMME FATALE

Kiss your mother with that mouth?

DETECTIVE

You don't seem surprised to see me. I'm guessing you're the person to talk to about stolen fruit.

FEMME FATALE

You were picking too close to the ground, detective. I run the black farmers market. If it grows, I sell it.

DETECTIVE

So, a stolen cara cara...

FEMME FATALE

Might have come my way.

She pulls out a small orange.

DETECTIVE

Strange that something so small could be worth so much trouble.

FEMME FATALE

Normally I'd be dictating the price, but I need to be rid of this thing. Too many questions. People get hurt with produce this hot.

(hands over the orange)

Take it. It's cursed. Better with you than me.

The Femme Fatale disappears.

DETECTIVE

I could practically smell my pay day. It smelled like breakfast.

EXT. HOUSE.

The detective knocks on the front door. Scarlet appears in a sultry bathrobe.

SCARLET

Oh, detective. I wasn't expecting a caller at this hour.

DETECTIVE

You did say you'd make it worth my while.

Scarlet purrs. The detective pulls out the orange.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)

I believe you've been looking for this red navel.

Scarlet balks.

SCARLET

That's an orange.

DETECTIVE

I wouldn't know. I don't see color.

SCARLET

No. I mean, that's a fruit. Where's my mother's necklace?

DETECTIVE

(sour)

Come again?

SCARLET

The ruby. The priceless heirloom?

DETECTIVE

(confidently)

This may not be what you asked for, but it's what you needed.

He hands her the orange.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)

Now, as for my fee.

SCARLET

I'm sorry, detective. I thought things would end differently for us. But it seems I'm always chasing the wrong kind of man.

She hands back the orange and closes the door. The detective walks away, peeling the orange. He stops when he passes a CLOWN making balloons.

CLOWN

What, you've never been to a funeral before.

The detective walks away.

EXT. STREET.

The detective eats the orange.

DETECTIVE

It turns out there are more than a few red navels floating around in Hollyweird tonight. Always a shame when you can't solve a big case, but I was on the wrong trail from the get go. It had been a set up. But by whom?

FLASHBACK:

The detective flashes back to certain lines of dialogue.

"Precious heirloom."

His assistant googling the Red Navel. ON THE SCREEN, we see the third option is a GIANT ruby.

The assistant says: "I lived next to them my whole life. Rich bastards."

The detective smiles.

DETECTIVE (CONT'D)

Clever boy. Looks like we're making rent
this month after all.

INT. BEDROOM.

The assistant, getting ready for bed, admires the RUBY.