

THE FAN

Written by

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INT. BOOKSTORE - DAY

The space is filled with shelves and cases of books lining the space near the walls of the store. Cases are arranged in clusters by category (e.g. Fiction, Mystery, etc.). Near the front, tables are filled with discounted books.

In an open space by the YOUNG ADULT SECTION, chairs are arranged in neat rows with a center aisle running between them. TWO LIVING ROOM STYLE CHAIRS are placed on an ELEVATED PLATFORM in front of the chairs while a CAMERA AND TRIPOD are to the right.

The rows are filled with people, most of whom are young adults. Towards the center sits KEIRA, a bubbly sixteen year old, excitedly leaning forward in her seat. Her hair is styled in loose waves and she wears an OVERSIZED MILITARY JACKET over a BLACK DRESS WITH A WHITE FLORAL PATTERN, SHEER TIGHTS, and beat up COMBAT BOOTS.

To the left of the platform is an easel with a POSTER. On one half of the poster is a photograph of a MAN, on the other is a picture of a BOOK JACKET that reads AN INCIDENT IN THE NIGHT. Bellow the images, "Q&A AND BOOK SIGNING" is printed in bold letters.

In the chair closest to the easel sits a woman, THE FACILITATOR, in the other is the man in the picture author of the *An Incident in the Night* series RYDER J. BROOKS - twenty-six and handsome. He wears a blazer and his hair is styled in a faux-hawk. He reads from a book.

BROOKS

"Mol squinted trying to make sense of her surroundings. As she regained her footing, the events of the past twenty-four hours flashed before her - the river, the suffocating smell, and of course, Jack, his signature smirk plastered on his face. Where was he? And more importantly, where was she?"

Brooks closes the book as the audience begins to clap. Keira claps more fervently than the others.

FACILITATOR

That was an excerpt from the third installment of *The Incident of the Night* series, *Dawn of the Day*. Mr. Brooks will now take some questions from the audience.

Keira's hand shoots up, eager to be called on. Brooks points to a reporter in the front. Keira drops her hand down.

REPORTER

Rumors are swirling the Universal has purchased the rights to the series with Chloe Grace Moretz tapped to star. Care to comment?

Brooks grins.

BROOKS

Well, this is news to me.

The audience chuckles.

BROOKS

No, Universal has not purchased the rights to the series. Different options are being looked at, but as of now, nothing I can comment on.

Keira and a few other audience members raise their hands. Brooks points to someone in the back.

AUDIENCE MEMBER #1

What is it about the series that you think makes so many people connect and relate to it?

BROOKS

We live in a world where others feel the need to put limits on one another. The series is all about rejecting those limits, overcoming them by any means. A lot of people feel stuck and that they can't overcome the limits. I think they find hope and comfort in seeing characters like Mol and Jack do what they think as the impossible.

Brooks takes a sip from a glass of water. Keira shoots her hand up yet again.

BROOKS

Yes, the Mol Harrington look-alike.

Keira blushes as the audience snickers.

KEIRA

(fast)

Uh hi. I'm a huge fan of the books.

(MORE)

KEIRA (CONT'D)

I mean you probably figured that out already cause I'm here and ya know...

Keira gestures to her outfit.

KEIRA

Anyway, you ended *Dawn of the Day* with such a huge cliffhanger, so when will we finally find out what happened to Mol? And Jack? It's driving me crazy! When's the next book coming out?

Brooks's expression falters, but it quickly recomposed.

BROOKS

(coolly)

There's no other book. That's how it ends. Yes, the man in the brown hat.

Keira's expression is one of utter shock.

INT. BOOKSTORE - LATER

Keira is standing in line impatiently waiting in line to get her book signed.

Keira gets to the front of the line. Brooks is sitting behind a table, pen in hand. An attendant stands by the table. Keira hands over her book and immediately begins talking.

KEIRA

Hi, I'm Keira. I asked a question earlier.

Brooks clicks his pen open and opens the book to the title page, unfazed by Keira's blabbering.

KEIRA

How can *Dawn of the Day* be it? There's so much left to be answered! We need to know what happens to Mol. This can't be--

ATTENDANT

(annoyed)

You're holding the line up.

Brooks hands Keira her signed book as the attendant gestures her off to the side.

EXT. PARKING LOT - EVENING

Brooks exits the bookstore to the back parking lot. He slings a brown SACHEL over his shoulder. The lot is sparse except for a couple of cars. As he walks, Keira appears at his side seemingly out of nowhere.

BROOKS
Jesus! What the f--

KEIRA
You can't just end it like that!
It's not fair! We have a right to
know what happens!

BROOKS
Look kid, that's how it ends.
You're just gonna have to accept
that. Let it go. Start a new book
or somethin'.

Brooks quickens his pace. Keira walks faster to keep up with him.

KEIRA
But what about Mol? I *need* to know
what happens! She can't just end up
helpless in the dark!

BROOKS
Well she did.

KEIRA
Bu--

BROOKS
G'night kid.

Brooks heads towards his car. Keira plants her feet. Her face is one of pure determination.

EXT. PARKING LOT - LATER

Brooks takes out his car keys from his coat pocket and unlocks his car. He gets in, slams the door shut, and sticks the keys in the ignition. The car roars to life as Brooks switches the headlights on.

He switches the radio on and begins to drive. As he nears the exit of the parking lot, he suddenly slams his foot on the break and comes to a hard stop - Keira is standing in his path.

Brooks opens the door and gets out of the car not bothering to turn it off or shut the door.

BROOKS
What the hell?! You--

Brooks moves towards Keira.

KEIRA
Tell me how it ends.

BROOKS
Wha--

KEIRA
So you end the series and
disappoint all of your fans, fine,
be a jackass. At least tell me what
happens to Mol -- we deserve that
much.

Brooks stares at Keira in shock.

Keira's bubbly and sunny appearance has shifted to one of sass and anger.

Brooks clenches his fists and jaw and lets out a deep breath.

BROOKS
You have--

KEIRA
Tell me!

BROOKS
Fine! You wanna know what happens?!
Mol grows up and can't deal with
what she's been through so she
becomes a mean, angry, alcoholic
and goes on a killing spree--

KEIRA
Bullshit.

BROOKS
You asked--

KEIRA
Tell. Me. What. Happens.

BROOKS
I don't know!

KEIRA

What do you mean you don't know?!
You have to know! You--

BROOKS

I don't know! I didn't write the
damn books!

Keira stares at Brooks in utter disbelief.

KEIRA

You wha--

BROOKS

I didn't write them, ok!

Brooks pauses for a moment.

BROOKS

They were a pet project of my
sister's. I found the manuscripts
after she died and knew she'd have
wanted them published. But there
was only so much...Does that make
you happy?! Are you satisfied now?!

Keira's eyes widen.

Brooks's expression softens slightly.

BROOKS

I'm so--

Keira's eyes narrow and her nose flares out.

KEIRA

(softly)
You're a liar.

BROOKS

Wha--

KEIRA

You're a fucking liar! You betrayed
us! We loved you - you were a god,
we believed in you, in what you
wrote. It was our way to escape...

Brooks reaches his hand out towards Keira.

BROOKS

I'm so so--

Keira swats Brooks's hand away.

KEIRA
 (shrieks)
 Don't touch me!

Brooks takes a step back.

KEIRA
 I can't believe I ever worshipped
 you or your stupid books. It was a
 lie, all of it...

BROOKS
 Keira I--

KEIRA
 Fuck you.

BROOKS
 Wha--

KEIRA
 Fuck you! You're a fraud, a coward!

Keira reaches into her bag a violently throws her newly signed copy of *An Incident in the Night* on the ground in front of Brooks.

Keira starts to walk away, head held down.

Brooks bends down and picks up the book.

BROOKS
 (loudly)
 What would you have done?

Keira stops in her tracks and slowly turns around.

KEIRA
 What?

Brooks slowly walks towards her.

BROOKS
 I said, what would you have done?
 What would you have done if you
 were me? Not publish something that
 deserved to be seen, to be read by
 million and j-just let it rot away
 in some cardboard box?

KEIRA
 No.

BROOKS

Then what?

KEIRA

I would stop whining, man up, and finish what I started.

BROOKS

But how?

Keira gives him a slight eye roll.

KEIRA

It's not like you can't write - I've some of your other stuff, your short stories...

Brooks looks surprised.

BROOKS

My short stories? From college? But how did you--

KEIRA

The internet is a strange and wonderful place, especially for fans.

Brooks lowers himself to the curb, rubs his eyes, and exhales slowly.

KEIRA

I mean look at all the fan fic out there - people are practically finishing the series for you. There's so much you could do, you just gotta sit down and try.

BROOKS

Did you ever write any? Fan fic?

Keira blushes and lowers herself to the curb.

KEIRA

(mumbling)
Maybe.

BROOKS

Mhmm...

KEIRA

I may have dabbled...

Brooks pushes himself off the curb with his hands and stand up.

KEIRA
Hey! Where are you going?

BROOKS
To write that book.

Keira eyes brighten.

Brook starts to walk away towards the bookstore. He pauses and turns towards Keira.

BROOKS
You coming?

A curious Keira rises and follows him.

INT. BOOKSTORE - THREE HOURS LATER

Brooks and Keira are sitting at a small table in the rather empty bookstore. Brooks's satchel is lying open on the table. He writes in a leather-bound notebook. He puts his pen down on the table and cracks his knuckles.

BROOKS
I think that's a start.

KEIRA
I can't wait to read it.

They sit in an awkward silence.

Brooks scratches his head and clears his throat.

BROOKS
Hey, I...uh...I want you to have this.

He reaches into his satchel and carefully takes out a necklace. The necklace is a thin, gold chain with a hollow circle shape in the middle. On each side where the chain meets circle, there is a small red bead.

Keira look at the necklace, surprised.

KEIRA
Mol's neckl--

She picks up the necklace and plays with it in her hands.

BROOKS

It's my only original contribution to the books. Ange, my sister, it was hers. And I-I just wanted a part of her to live on, so I thought if Mol wore it...

More awkward silence.

BROOKS

You remind me of her. You have that same fire and passion that she had. And spunk, lots of spunk. I saw that special spark in her eyes and I can see it in yours. It's just sitting there waiting to burst, to be heard.

Brooks begins packing up his things.

BROOKS

You should use it. You're so much more than an obsessive, empty fan girl. Don't get me wrong, stories are important, but not as important as having an identity of your own...

Keira stares at him, hard.

KEIRA

(sincerely)
Thanks...

BROOKS

Anytime.

Brooks rises and slings his satchel over his shoulder. He opens the flap and reaches into the satchel.

BROOKS

Almost forgot.

Brooks takes out Keira's copy of *An Incident in the Night*.

BROOKS

I believe you'll be wanting this back...

Keira takes the books from him. A business card with a phone number sticks out from the pages.

BROOKS

Keep in touch.

Brooks leaves.

Keira toys with the necklace a bit and after a few moments, unclasps it and puts it on.

She stares at the card, smiling to herself.

FADE TO BLACK.