

Hibernation

By

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FADE IN:

1

INT. TENTED MARKET CASHIER LINE - DAY

1

Balloons and streamers swarm a dazzling indoor market. PETER, 10, stands in line as awkward as a string bean balancing on a tightrope. He periodically adjusts his glasses.

He stands next to his MOTHER, 30s, emotional and smothering. People are bursting with giggles of joy around them. Everything is glowing in soft hues of pastel; it's simply blissful.

ANNOUNCER

Congratulations to the first-timers who have finally begun the journey into adulthood! And welcome back to the experienced dreamers! This is the final opportunity to purchase your very own unique dream package for the five hibernation months! As usual, get your fingerprint scanned in order to receive your unique dream.

Peter stands two heads below his MOTHER, who keeps adjusting his tie and smoothing his hair. Peter curiously observes a pair of girls talking about their dreams and licking spiraling lollipops.

Underneath Peter is a glass floor that changes transparency from foggy to clear. Bubbles rise from stories below and delicately burst on the other side of the glass. He tugs on his mother's sleeve.

PETER

Can you explain dreaming one more time?

MOTHER

Of course dear.

His mother covers his eyes so he can harness his imagination. He giggles--she has done this before.

MOTHER (CONT.)

Imagine instead of simply going to bed and waking up in the morning, you can go on an incredible journey in between. You can venture far from reality to a place full of magic and wonder. And you won't be

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MOTHER (CONT.) (cont'd)
alone because a dream guide will
show you how the impossible becomes
possible and everything this
dreamworld has to offer.

She uncovers his eyes. Peters eyes are quizzical.

PETER
You left out where they come from.

MOTHER
Right. They come from the depths of
your imagination uncovered in your
DNA. These are then spun together
in scientific labs so that our
dreams are ready to access once the
hibernation starts.

(beat)
But what I've told you doesn't
capture the essence of the dream
world. You have to experience it to
fully understand its beauty.

Peter is next in line. The CASHIER, 45, who looks as jolly
as a Santa's helper dons exaggerated fake eyelashes and a
comforting grin. She cheerfully waves a gloved hand to him.
His mother turns to him.

MOTHER
This is when we must depart Peter
dearest. I hope you have best
adventures during your first
hibernation. Once you get to
dreamland everything will be
absolutely perfect. Make it count.
You won't be dreaming for the next
two years until the next
hibernation.

PETER
No pressure or anything.

MOTHER
Exactly. Now here's your dinner for
tonight. I cut the bread into
little triangles just how you like
it. Are you sure you want me to
leave before you open it?

She hands Peter the sandwich.

CASHIER
Hurry along please!

Peter nods and his mother squeezes his cheeks and gives him a fat kiss on his forehead. Peter steps up to the Cashier with a lipstick mark plastered on his forehead.

CUT TO:

2 INT. TENTED MARKET CASHIER - DAY (CONT.) 2

Peter places his hand face-up so that the Cashier can scan his fingerprint.

CASHIER
Your name my dearest?

PETER
Peter Honeywinkle.

CASHIER
Ah Mr. Honeywinkle, this is your first dream! And where are your friends for this occasion my dear?

PETER
My mother was here.

The Cashier glances up to see Peter's mother lingering near the exit waving wildly. The Cashier smiles uncomfortably.

She finds Peter's dream and hands him a delicately wrapped box covered in slippery bows.

PETER
What do I do now?

CASHIER
It's on the sign! Go to the opening station to the left.

She motions to a very large sign with steps of the hibernation process.

PETER
Thank you.

Peter awkwardly hurries away.

CUT TO:

3 INT. TENTED MARKET SEATED AREA - DAY

3

Peter carefully unties the ribbons from the box and lifts the lid. A delicate voice begins to speak.

VOICE #1

For Peter Honeywinkle the following
is in store.

(beat)

Dark and dreary the night will be
when a monstrous hairy creature
will step into the moonlight.

Peter, aghast, jerks backwards and shuts the lid. His eyes are wide.

PETER

Horrid creature of the night?
Heavens no!

He glances around him and other customers are gaping at him. Peter scrambles to his feet with the smallest drop of pride, adjusts his glasses, and hurries to the cashier.

CUT TO:

4 INT. TENTED MARKET CASHIER - DAY

4

PETER

Excuse me, Miss.

CASHIER

Yes?

PETER

I would like to return my dream. I
think there's been a mistake.

The Cashier shakes her head.

CASHIER

I'm afraid that's not possible.
That is your unique dream and yours
alone!

Peter looks slightly rattled and shuffles away. He notices two girls (18) happily comparing their dreams and approaches them exasperated.

PETER

Hello! Would you like to swap one
of your dreams with mine if you
don't mind.

(CONTINUED)

Peter stands there blinking, expectantly. The girls look bemused.

GIRL #1

He must be a first-timer. How old are you?

PETER

I'm 10 years old.

GIRL #1

Called it. Let me explain. Your dream is coded to your specific DNA therefore it only works for you. Swapping a dream would be like a blood transfusion without knowing both blood types. If my dream is blood type A it would mix terribly with your B blood type, you see?

Peter is confused. Behind the girl he spots an sign: "Expired Dreams Here"

PETER

Okay, thanks anyway.

Peter shuffles away and the girls smirk.

ANNOUNCER

5 more minutes until we close for the night! Hurry and collect your dreams.

CUT TO:

5 INT. TENTED MARKET EXPIRED DREAMS CORNER - DAY

5

Peter shuffles to the "Expired Dreams Here" sign and picks up a dust covered box. He blows off the dust in short puffs. He carefully opens the lid and a male voice starts speaking.

VOICE #2

A gaunt wolf will feast on the remains of your foot while--

PETER

Goodness me!

Peter jerks away from the box terrified and throws it away. He opens up another dream and a croaky voice starts speaking.

(CONTINUED)

VOICE #3

On a windy day, the skies will spew
hot lava onto the crying beds of--

PETER

How dreadful!

Peter is now drained of color and shaking with fear. He
throws the second box away.

ANNOUNCER

The time has come to gather your
dreams and begin the hibernation
process. Congratulations again to
the first-timers for receiving
their first hibernation dream
package. Enjoy the endless journeys
ahead everyone. Hope to see you all
for in two years for the next
hibernation season. Dream away.

All of the happy customers exit. Peter is left alone with
his unfortunate dream by his feet. He picks it up
unwillingly and exits behind the happy customers.

DISSOLVE TO:

(OVER BLACK) TITLE CARD: FIRST NIGHT OF HIBERNATION

CUT TO:

6 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

6

Peter is seated on his bed criss-crossed eating his
triangle-cut sandwiches. In front of him is the wrapped
dream. His room is littered with Congratulations cards and
balloons. He nervously unwraps his dream.

VOICE #1

Will you take this dream to be your
entertainment for your hibernation?

PETER

Yup... here goes nothing.

Peter braces himself and turns off the lights.

CUT TO:

7 DREAM SEQUENCE INT. LARGE ROOM - NIGHT 7

Peter stands alone in a empty white room. His breath is a cloud of icy air. He hears a SCRATCHING noise then sees the doorknob turn.

A silhouette of a towering beast enters the door and starts walking towards Peter. Peter starts SCREAMING, runs to the opposite door and opens it.

CUT TO:

8 INT. PETER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 8

Peter wakes up pale and sweaty in his bed. He turns on all the lights.

PETER

Nope that's not for me.

He puts on his glasses and dials his mother's phone number. He reaches her voicemail.

MOTHER'S VOICEMAIL

Hello dearies. I have already fallen asleep for the hibernation months. Please contact me when I wake. Kisses!

PETER

Hi mother. Bad news. My dream is not happy. I'm going to stay awake throughout hibernation. Wish you were here. I miss you dearly.

Peter looks distressed. He adjusts his glasses and shuts off his phone. He looks up sadly at a framed portrait of his mother squeezing his cheeks on his wall.

CUT TO:

9 DREAM SEQUENCE INT. LARGE ROOM - DAY 9

The towering beast from Peter's nightmare is sitting in the darkness in the middle of the room. His hair is an unkept array of black and brown curls.

He is methodically cutting something up. It's making a unpleasant sound and he is deviously humming.

CUT TO:

10 INT. PETER'S BEDROOM - DAY 10

Peter is seated on the same spot on his bed with dark circles underneath his eyes.

DISSOLVE TO:

(OVER BLACK) TITLE CARD: SECOND NIGHT OF HIBERNATION

CUT TO:

Peter attempts to drink coffee. Spits it out. Second attempt he gulps it but starts gagging.

11 INT. PETER'S BATHROOM - DAY 11

He frantically scrubs his tongue clean of the coffee taste.

CUT TO:

12 INT. PETER'S BEDROOM - DAY 12

He then plugs in speakers and blasts it. But it's so loud he jumps back startled.

Then he plugs in lights and lamps of all shapes and sizes. It blinds him and he grabs his eyes. Hopeless, he lies in bed staring up at the ceiling. The monotonous TICK of a clock ensues.

CUT TO:

13 DREAM SEQUENCE INT. LARGE ROOM - DAY 13

The beast paces back and forth near the exit. He bangs his fists against the door.

DISSOLVE TO:

(OVER BLACK) TITLE CARD: THIRD NIGHT OF HIBERNATION

CUT TO:

14 CLOSE UP - PETER'S EYES 14

His eyes are bloodshot and hugged by puffy dark circles.

15 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT (CONT.) 15

Peter in a tired trance, he walks over to his desk and rips apart his "Congratulations" cards and pops his festive balloons.

He sits back on his bed observing his destruction. Then his eyes flutter like birds and he gives in to sleep.

CUT TO:

16 DREAM SEQUENCE INT. LARGE ROOM - NIGHT 16

Peter is sucked back into the cold, dark living room again. The same SCRATCHING and turning doorknob ensues. He hurries to the door but the beast blocks Peter's way.

PETER

Oh no.

Peter shuts his eyes and prepares for the worst.

STEVE

Hi my name is Steve! It's nice to meet you.

Peter opens his eyes hesitantly.

CUT TO:

17 CLOSE UP - STEVE'S FACE 17

In front of Peter is a hairy monstrous STEVE (20s) with veiny, bulging yellow eyes. Peter recoils in fear and shuts his eyes again.

PETER

Please don't eat me! There's been a mistake! This is not my dream!

18 DREAM SEQUENCE INT. LARGE ROOM - NIGHT (CONT) 18

STEVE

Your name is Peter Honeywinkle, correct?

Peter nods. He's shaking.

STEVE (CONT.)

Nice to meet you. My name is Steve and this *is* your dream. It was determined by your DNA sample.

(CONTINUED)

Peter opens his eyes hesitantly to a table covered in overflowing bowls of gummy worms, cotton candy, and chocolate. Peter's fear vanishes.

PETER
Why, how splendid!

STEVE
See? No need to be afraid. I'm only going to eat you *after* you get plump from all the food.

PETER
What!!

STEVE
Kidding, jeez. It was a reference to (beat) nevermind.

Peter adjusts his glasses and observes the rest of the room which is now decorated with cut-out paper snowflakes and banners (what Steve was cutting earlier).

PETER
Where are we?

Peter begins eating from the lavish candy spread.

STEVE
We're in the neutral zone in between both the dreamworld and reality. That door leads to reality and the one across from it leads to your dreams.

PETER
Can I leave at any time?

STEVE
Technically, but you're given five months to dream for a reason. Before the government allowed the hibernation, the whole population was going mentally insane because their minds were never relaxing in a dream state.

Steve pulls out a marvelous dream diagram poster.

STEVE
Enough hibernation talk! How about we get to business.

PETER

I thought we didn't do work during hibernation.

STEVE

I mean we need to talk about our plan! First, we'll get you a nice hearty breakfast. Then we can go bungee jumping across the tropical rainforests!

Steve glides his finger along the diagram. Peter shivers suddenly at the mention of bungee jumping.

PETER

My mother told me I'm afraid of heights! And it sounds scary.

STEVE

It's only scary at first, mama's boy! Then it becomes exciting!

PETER

Alright, look. Everyone has perfect dreams. No one is ever scared!

(beat)

That's just how it goes.

STEVE

(laughs rudely)

Peter grow up. Life is not a rosy bed of flowers even in dream hibernation. How else will the happy dreams seem so happy if there isn't any contrast!

PETER

Oh.

(beat)

I suppose that makes sense.

STEVE

That's why there are nightmares.

Suddenly the "reality" door across the room slowly opens and a soft murmur emanates from it. Steve becomes inaudible but his lips keep moving, then he freezes.

Peter shakes Steve but he remains frozen. He hesitantly walks towards the door and the voice becomes clearer.

(CONTINUED)

MOTHER (V.O.)

Peter wake up!

PETER

Mother? Why are you in my dream?

MOTHER (V.O.)

I heard your voicemail that you have a scary dream and I came right away. I'm going to switch your dream with mine. If you exit through the door you'll wake up!

PETER

(glances at Steve)

No mother. I want to stay here. I have to know what's out there. If I experience the bad I'll get to the good.

MOTHER (V.O.)

Peter that's rubbish. Exit the door now.

PETER

I'm not a baby anymore. I want to keep my dream!

Peter slams the door and his mother's voice dissolves. Steve unfreezes as if there was never an interruption.

STEVE

So since you stupidly resisted sleep for a couple of days I had to change our plans slightly. After bungee jumping I'll give you a general tour of the dreamworld. Then it's completely up to you.

(beat)

How does that sound?

PETER

Great. Let's make this count.

CUT TO:

19

INT. PETER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

19

Peter sleeps soundly. A slow smile appears on his rosy cheeks.

FADE OUT