

BLUR CIRCLE

Written by

Chunzi Shi

INT. HOUSE-DAY

The WALL of the living room is full of PHOTOGRAPHS, showing Sally with her boyfriend and her family members. Several pictures show her in her youth hugging her dog.

There is a PARROT standing in the birdcage near the window.

Sally, in black sweater, looks at the photos on the wall.

She hears someone opens the letter box outside the house.

She takes the camera, walks to the door, bare foot.

The floor is covered with all kinds of photographs.

She puts on her red rain boots, opens the door and goes toward the letter box.

There is the single house in the woods.

EXT. GARDEN OUT OF THE HOUSE-DAY

Sally opens the letter box, an ENVELOPE drops.

She picks up the envelope, which reads: Sorry, we can't publish your works.

She sighs, throws the letter in the dustbin, which is full of the same rejection letters.

INT. HOUSE-DAY

Phone bell rings.

She trots to the house, answers the phone.

SALLY
Hello, hello?

No one responses.

She hangs up the phone, walks to her desk.

The desk is piled with photographs of animals.

Sally watches the parrot, which sings in front of the desk.

SALLY (CONT'D)
Little Gigi, sweet heart.

Her computer screen lights up, the dialogue box pops up.

A person named DREAMER sends her a message.

DREAMER
How is it going today? Do you feel better?

Sally puts her camera on the desk and types.

SALLY
Yes.

DREAMER
Good. Let's play our old game, ok?

Sally takes a sip of water.

SALLY
All right... what mystery do you want me to explore?

Dreamer sends a picture that shows a totally white wall with spots on it.

DREAMER
Do you like this photo I took?

Sally leans forward to the screen and looks closely at the photo.

SALLY
Um... It is totally overexposed. You can just lower the ISO, the sensibility to 1000, to keep a good image quality.

DREAMER
Guess where I photographed it?

SALLY
Under the sunshine?

DREAMER
Wrong, it is in a absolute dark room, an X-ray room.

Sally chuckles, looks the sky through the window, the sunshine gets soft now.

Dreamer sends another photo to Sally, the photo shows a red rose with black background.

DREAMER (CONT'D)
What do you think of this photo? I took it yesterday.

Sally looks at the photo.

SALLY

You have made great progress, I think.
Um...You could use large aperture and fast shutter speed when you shoot in dark environment.

DREAMER

Guess where I took the photo?

Sally zooms in the photo on the screen.

SALLY

A dark room?

DREAMER

No. In an absolutely bright room, unfortunately.

Dreamer sends another photo to Sally, it shows a person from neck to hip, a red rose in the lapel pocket of the black clothes, with a pair of hands on the belly.

DREAMER (CONT'D)

That's the whole picture. Before was just a part of it.

Sally shakes her head, smiles and closes the lap top.

She stands up, knocks over the MUG.

The mug falls on the floor, breaks into pieces.

Sally startles, turns backs and looks down. The BLACK TEA spills from the broken mug, incarnadines several pictures on the floor.

She crouches to pick the pieces up, and throws them to the wastebasket.

Gigi anxiously flies in the birdcage.

Sally looks at the CLOCK on the table, it shows 4:32 p.m.

Sally takes her camera, goes upstairs to her room.

INT. SALLY'S ROOM

Sally sits in front of the mirror of her dressing table, starting her makeup.

She takes her lipstick from the drawer.

When She looks up to the mirror, she sees pieces of GLASS stuck into her head, and BLOOD flows down from the left side of her face.

She gasps, shakes her head.

The glass and blood disappear.

The telephone rings again.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Sally returns her mind, goes downstairs, picks up the phone.

SALLY

Hello?

A deep voice comes from the telephone.

DEEP VOICE

You should take the pill.

The call end.

Sally checks the screen of the telephone, it shows no number.

She puzzles, looks around the house, sighs. Then She puts on her coat, takes her camera, goes to the forest.

EXT. FOREST-DAY

She wanders in the forest, takes photos of different animals.

There is a beautiful DEER with only ONE ANTLER appears.

She stares at the deer, presses the shutter.

When she scans the photo in the camera, the deer in the photo becomes its SKELETON.

She is so scared that falls on the grass, and her camera drops.

She looks up, the deer disappear.

She breathes heavily.

She takes the camera and sees the picture again, it goes back to normal.

Suddenly she feels someone pats on her shoulder.

The voice comes from her back: People are always frightening themselves, right?

When she turns around, nobody is there.

She breathes heavier, stands up and runs back to her house.

INT. HOUSE-NIGHT

Sally runs into the house and locks the door.

Dreamer on the dialogue box asks many times about her.

DREAMER (TEXT)

Let's meet this week. We have been
chatting online for 3 months.
What is your address?
I got a gift for you.

Dreamer sends another message.

DREAMER (TEXT) (CONT'D)

Are you still there?

Sally sits in front of her desk, looks at her computer screen and texts.

SALLY

I took pictures in the woods
afternoon.

Sally links the camera with the computer, starts to print her photographs.

Several printed pictures show a black shadow in different places.

She frowns, takes these pictures and watches them carefully.

She combines them together.

She finds the pictures make up a person in a black dress lying on the grass, with a dagger stabbed in the chest.

Only a picture with the person's face is missing.

She takes a step back.

SALLY (CONT'D)

Jesus.

She rubs her eyes.

The black shadows on the photos disappear.

There is only a beautiful meadow with groups of BLACK DOVES with RED BEAKS on the pictures.

She grabs these photos and throws them to the hearth.

Dreamer sends another photo to her.

The photo shows a view of a girl's back, holding a camera and a hand on her shoulder.

DREAMER (TEXT)
How about this picture?

Sally stares at the picture, thinking about the horrible experience in the forest.

WE CUT TO:

EXT: THE FOREST

Someone is patting on Sally's shoulder when she photographed just now.

BACK TO:

INT. HOUSE

Sally is scared, she rolls her eyes and looks around the house.

She steps on a PIECE of the broken mug and it cut her left foot.

She falls painfully, her left foot bleeds.

The dialogue box pops up again.

DREAMER (TEXT)
All right, hope we will meet soon.

At the same time, the printer on the desk becomes uncontrolled, starts to print continuously.

The printed pictures look the same as the pictures on the wall of the living room.

But in the same position of the pictures, there is ANOTHER WOMAN standing beside Sally's boyfriend.

In the photos which Sally stands with her family members, they were all at a funeral, dresses in black and holding white flowers.

Several pictures show her dog is dead, she sits beside the dog, crying.

She stares at these pictures.

She stands up, pulls the POWER CORD of the printer, wants to stop it.

But she finds the plug isn't connected to the socket.

The telephone rings a third time.

She doesn't answer.

The telephone rings again and again.

INT. SALLY'S ROOM-NIGHT

She runs upstairs, rushes into her room, takes her pill bottle.

She hears someone kicks the house door open, who then rushes into the house.

She locks her room door, breathes heavier.

The footsteps come closer, stops outside her room.

The person outside knocks on the door.

DEEP VOICE (O.S.)

Take the pill.

Sally sits in front of the dressing table, trembles.

The person starts to hit the door.

DEEP VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You should take the pill.

Sally falls from the chair, crawls to the corner.

The person halts for a while.

Sally sits in the corner, curls up, trembles, looks at the door.

The person outside hits the door again, turning the door knob hard.

DEEP VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
You, must, take, the, pill!

She stands up, grabs the scissors on the dressing table.

There is no movement outside her door now.

She leans against the wall, breathes heavily.

She swiftly opens the door, finds no one else there.

She looks down, finds GIGI, her parrot, lies on the floor, dead.

She gasps, cries, puts the scissors on the floor, holds the parrot, puts it on her desk.

A deep voice comes from the THIRD FLOOR.

DEEP VOICE (CONT'D)
Loser.

Sally picks up the scissors, walks out of her room to the rotating stairs.

The house suddenly powers off.

She breathes heavier, walks towards the ATTIC on the Third floor.

She sees a person in black standing in the shadow.

She tries hard to see the person's face, but fails.

DEEP VOICE (CONT'D)
You can do nothing, you are totally
a dump photographer.

Sally stands on the first step of the stairs, holds the scissors, trembling.

SALLY
Who are you?

DEEP VOICE
You are afraid of communicating,
you are only living in the world
with yourself and your online
friends. No real friends, no
family, even no lover.

Sally cries, and walks upstairs slowly.

SALLY

Stop it!

DEEP VOICE

Your parents never call you. Your boyfriend abandons you. Even your photographs are rejected all the time. Poor girl, nobody loves you.

Sally holds the scissor firmly, points it towards the person in the shadow.

SALLY

Shut up!

DEEP VOICE

Even your dog, your parrot are dead, just because of your cowardice, because they hate you.

SALLY

Who are you? Please stop!

DEEP VOICE

I am you, sally, I am coming to save you.

Sally rushes toward the person in the shadow.

SALLY

You go to hell!

She stabs the scissors into the person's chest.

The person falls down.

Through the lights from the window, she sees the face of the person is HERSELF.

Sally throws the scissors, looks at her hands, which are full of BLOOD.

Sally screams, totters down the stairs.

She rushes out of the house to her car beside the letter box.

EXT. FOREST-DAY

She trembles to start the car, drives.

The dashboard shows 140 km/h.

As she is turning, a DEER rushes out from the wood, with only ONE ANTLER.

She cries out, brakes hard.

She hits the deer and the car bangs into the trees on the left side of the road.

Sally's head hits the front windshield.

She faints, glass is inserted into her head, and blood flows down from the left side of her face.

WE CUT TO:

INT. SALLY'S ROOM

The same position when Sally looks in the mirror, she sees glass inserted into her head and blood flows down.

WE CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST-DAY

We sees a group of people standing on the grass, all in black, with sad expressions.

Sally lies in the COFFIN, with eyes closed.

She dresses in a black sweater, with a RED ROSE in her lapel pocket.

Her hands are put on her belly, which is the same position in the photo that Dreamer sent to her.

We see Sally's parents standing beside the coffin, holding white flowers, crying.

Sally's boyfriend, holds another woman, looks at Sally beside the coffin.

Her father comes close to her and takes the last photo for her.

The scene freezes frame with the last photo of Sally lying in the coffin.

WE CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE-DAY

We see the uncontrolled printer, the pictures printed all show black shadows, the only one picture missing is Sally's FACE. The missing photo matches exactly with the photo her father takes for her.

WE CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE-NIGHT

We see Sally stabbing the scissors into the person's chest in the shadow. The person falls down, the face shown is hers.

WE CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL

The room is bright and all walls are white.

Sally wakes up with a start, with a red rose in her lapel pocket. In the same position as the photo in which she lies in the coffin.

She sits up, looks at her hand. There is no blood.

She touches her head. There is nothing inserted into her head.

Soon, she hears FOOTSTEPS come closer.

She becomes alert, clenches her fists.

The door opens.

A DOCTOR comes in, in a white robe, with a red rose in his lapel pockets. There is a name card on his pocket: Doctor Dreamer.

We only sees the doctor's body from the mouth down, without seeing his whole face.

DOCTOR DREAMER

I am Doctor Dreamer. How are you?

Sally sits still, with sweat beads creeping out of her skin.

DOCTOR DREAMER(CONT'D)

The operation for you is our special hypnosis, called Hypnosis in Confusion.

Doctor Dreamer comes closer to her bed, Sally stares at Doctor Dreamer, with her body moving backwards.

DOCTOR DREAMER (CONT'D)

It means hypnotizing the patients with all the miserable memories and painful feelings, which makes them feel desperate and hysterical, and pushes them to react to the imaginary dangerous situations. Finally, they reach the goal of healing.

SALLY

Healing?

DOCTOR DREAMER

Yes. I would like to call this process a Blur Circle. Because it blurs your mind, and finally pushes YOU to make everything to the end, to be conscious and awake.

SALLY

Was it really happening at all?

DOCTOR DREAMER

You don't need to know. Anyway, you have already killed yourself, killed your dark side of depression, social phobia and diffidence, in your mind. Now, you are a normal person, a normal photographer.

A smile comes across Doctor Dreamer's lips.

He takes out a pill bottle from his pocket.

DOCTOR DREAMER (CONT'D)

Now, you should take the pill.