

ONCE MORE, WITH FEELING

By

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ON BLACK

PRODUCTION COMPANY PRESENTS...

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

START ON FEET, PAN UP

JOHN (30's) and SARAH (30's) walk hand-in-hand along the  
SCIOTO MILE. Two lovers, out for a stroll.

CUT TO:

ON BLACK

JOHN GROTE

SARAH MILLER

MARK CULLISON

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

START ON FEET, PAN UP

John and Sarah slow dance to music only they can hear.

CUT TO:

ON BLACK

ONCE MORE, WITH FEELING

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

START ON FEET, PAN UP

John and Sarah cuddle on the couch. John leans in for a  
kiss.

CUT TO:

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SARAH (O.S.)  
(terrified scream)  
JOHN!

CUT TO:

INT. MORGUE - NIGHT

STATIC SHOT, CLOSE ON FEET

A morgue table. Close on two delicate, FEMALE FEET. A TOE TAG adorns one big toe.

JOHN (O.S.)  
That's her. That's Sarah. That's  
my-

He chokes off a sob.

FADE TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

John drinks alone. He checks his SMARTPHONE.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12.

MARK (30's) sidles up beside John, flags down a drink. He glances at John.

MARK  
Drinking alone?

John doesn't answer. Mark squints, then... recognition.

MARK  
You're him. From the news. Damn.  
Sorry.

The bartender arrives with Mark's drink. Mark motions for another drink for John, then sips at his whiskey.

MARK  
Must have been awful, finding her  
like that.

John's drink arrives. He glances at Mark, resentful, but he accepts the drink nonetheless. He downs it in one swig.

(CONTINUED)

MARK

How long were you married.

A long pause before John answers.

JOHN

Two years.

MARK

Not nearly enough time. Then again,  
it never is, is it?

A rough BARK of a laugh escapes John. He stares at his empty glass.

JOHN

I keep reliving that day over and  
over. I should have been there.

He's close to tears, but he holds them back. He pushes the empty glass away, stands to leave.

MARK

(staring into his own glass)  
What would you give?

JOHN

(confrontational)  
Excuse me?

MARK

To be there, when it happened. What  
would you give to catch the bastard  
who did that to her, to put a knife  
to his throat and end his life?

Mark takes a slow, measured drink, savoring the taste. He places his glass on the bar then looks into John's eyes.

MARK

What would you give?

JOHN

Who are you?

MARK

You know who I am, John. I'm the  
one who can give you what you want.

Mark reaches into his pocket, places a SCARRED SILVER DOLLAR on the bar. John's eye fix on the coin.

(CONTINUED)

MARK

It's yours, if you want it.

JOHN

It's a coin.

MARK

It's so much more than a coin,  
John. It's a chance to see Sarah  
again.

At the mention of her name, John's eyes snap back to Mark, furious. Mark pays no mind as he places a \$20 on the bar to pay for the drinks.

MARK

All you have to do is take it. But  
know this: nothing is free in this  
world.

Mark leaves without looking back.

John stares at the coin for a long moment. He reaches out and snatches the coin from the bar.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

John walks toward his empty house.

Only it's not empty. He catches sight of his wife, Sarah, in the downstairs window as she closes the curtains.

John's stunned. He reaches into his pocket, pulls out his smartphone.

It reads: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9.

JOHN

It can't be.

QUICK SHOT OF SMARTPHONE FROM BAR, SHOWING SATURDAY'S DATE.

CUT BACK TO THE EXTERIOR HOME SHOT

John looks up at his house. He risks a hopeful smile.

His smile falls as he sees A SHADOWY FIGURE enter his home through the front door.

Inside, the LIGHTS GO OUT.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN

SARAH!

John SPRINTS toward the house.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

John bursts through the front door into the darkness of the family room.

JOHN

Sarah!

No answer.

John dashes into -

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

- the kitchen. John flips the light switch. Nothing.

JOHN

Sarah! Where are you?

Moonlight glints off the KNIFE on the counter. Upstairs, John hears a THUD.

John grabs the knife and bolts -

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

- up the stairs. He stops at the top the stairs, suddenly cautious. He listens. Nothing.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

POV SHOT

The tension is palpable as John walks through the upstairs hallway, peering into each room.

A HAND on his shoulder!

John spins, and plunges the knife deep into his attacker's belly, deep into -

Sarah's belly.

Sarah looks down at the knife in disbelief. She looks up into her husband's eyes.

(CONTINUED)

SARAH  
(confused)  
John?

Sarah slips to the ground. John doesn't let go, drifting down with her.

JOHN  
No, no, no...

Sarah looks over his shoulder.

SARAH  
John? Someone's here.

John follows her eyes. Mark stands at the end of the hallway.

DIFFERENT LIGHTING ON MARK, DARKER, RED?

JOHN  
(furious)  
Who are you?

MARK  
Come now, John. We've been over this already. You know who I am.

SARAH  
(weaker)  
John? It hurts...

John looks at his dying wife, helpless, then back at the intruder. He doesn't hold his anger back.

JOHN  
What do you want?

MARK  
You know what I want.

Sarah goes limp in John's arms.

JOHN  
Sarah? Sarah!

MARK  
You know how this ends, John. Sarah doesn't make it.

John gently lays Sarah on the floor.

MARK

How would a man live with himself,  
knowing he had killed his own wife.

Mark shakes his head in a disapproving manner.

John slides the blood-stained knife from Sarah's belly.

MARK

I couldn't imagine a worse hell  
than that. Could you?

John lets it all sink in.

Mark, standing at the hall, stifling his quiet laughter.

Sarah, lying before him, dead by his own hand.

The bloody knife in his hands.

John puts the knife to his throat and slowly slides it from  
one ear to the other.

Mark smiles, absolutely satisfied. He walks to John's dying  
form, reaches into John's pocket, and retrieves his coin.

MARK

Excellent! Now, let's do this once  
more, with feeling.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE

KEY MOMENTS FLY BY BEFORE OUR EYES IN REVERSE

STOP AT THE BAR, AT THE MOMENT JOHN ASKS MARK -

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - NIGHT

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world.

Mark leaves without looking back.

MARK WALKS TOWARD THE CAMERA

Mark's smile widens with each step he takes. At the last  
moment, he looks up, right into the camera, and winks.

CUT TO:

ON BLACK

Mark's evil laughter fills the air.

FADE OUT.