

Swirl

written by

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INT. COURTROOM - DAY

ALEX (23) sits next to a lawyer at the plaintiffs table of the courtroom. She wears an oversized and wrinkled blazer. At the defendants table sits MITCH (25) and his lawyer. He wears a perfectly pressed tuxedo.

Alex looks towards the judge with her hands held tight in her lap, her jaw is tightly clenched.

JUDGE

Case number 15-10053. We the jury find the defendant Mitch DePonty, count one, NOT guilty of criminal sexual misconduct in the second degree. Thank you Jury, for your service today. Court is adjourned.

The Judge hits the gavel to dismiss the court. Alex remains still as her lawyer rubs her hand across her back. Mitch and his lawyer rise from their seats, shake hands, and begin exiting the court room. They pass right in front of the plaintiffs table in high stride. Mitch has the slightest grin on his face.

INT. DISHEVELED APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Alex enters her apartment completely distraught, tears streaming down her face. She is returning from court in her same oversized blazer and dress pants. The apartment is incredibly disheveled, almost filthy. Paint is peeling from the walls, the ceiling is leaking, the wooden floors are sinking and discolored. Piles of trash scatter about.

Alex makes her way to the bathroom. Closing the door behind her she pauses in front of the mirror, looking at her tear ridden face. She splashes her face with water and uses her palms to violently rub her face clean of makeup.

She begins undressing herself. As she slips off her blazer and top we notice for the first time that she is pregnant. Alex pauses and looks at her self in the mirror, solemnly rubbing her hand over her 5 month pregnancy bump.

INT. BUSTLING SUBWAY STATION - DAY

Alex sits behind an electronic keyboard playing a happy-go-lucky song. A piece of paper that says "tips appreciated" is propped up next to an empty solo cup. She plays the song with a big smile, doing her best to truly perform.

Multiple subway riders rush past, paying her no mind. Eventually, a group of 3 young men, BRANDON (22), STEPHEN (22), and LUKE (22) rush by. Brandon accidentally kicks over her sign and cup. Wadded up bills and coins fly across the stations floor. Alex quickly stops playing and stands to yell at the men.

ALEX
HEY! LOOK WHERE YOU'RE GOING!

Brandon looks back at Alex and chuckles.

BRANDON
Oh shit. Sorry Mozart.

The group of men walk away laughing. Alex walks towards the dispersed money and bends down to pick it all up. She looks towards the departing group of men, annoyed.

ALEX (UNDER HER BREATH)
Fuckin cucks.

INT. BUSTLING SUBWAY STATION - LATER

Alex stands with her headphones in, holding her packed up keyboard waiting for the train. The sound of loud, obviously drunk men begins to grow louder through the station as they approach the now arriving train. Alex looks down the platform to see its the same group of men that ran into her sign from earlier. She pulls her hoodie up to hide the side of her face from them and walks into the train. They unintentionally enter the same subway car.

Alex quickly takes a seat and keeps her head down in a spot next to the door. The group of men all stay standing next to her, still loudly and drunkingly conversing with one another.

STEPHEN
Brandon, man. She was begging for it.

LUKE
Did you fucking see her face by the end of the night? Her eyes were looking in two different directions.

The men laugh.

BRANDON

Nah man, her eyes were rolling back. And the drinks didn't have anything to do with that. She got it good.

The men whoop and holler at Brandon, patting him on the back.

STEPHEN

Thank God for mother fuckin alcohol.

Stephen mimes cheering a glass.

Alex keeps her eyes and head down, she clenches her jaw, and squeezes her hands into fists.

BEGIN FLASHBACK: 5 MONTHS AGO

INT. NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

Alex is on the dance floor with friends, they dance as lights flash all around them. Mitch approaches the group and hands Alex a drink, she accepts. Alex and Mitch begin to dance together. Alex begins drinking and becomes increasingly more incoherent, falling back on to Mitch - he smiles trying to hold her body up.

Mitch walks into a bathroom holding Alex's almost fully limp body at the waist. Alex grabs for the wall before falling to the ground. Mitch begins taking his belt off as he closes the bathroom door.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - CONTINUOUS

Back in the subway car, Alex is still tense from hearing the conversation between the group of men.

BRANDON

Fuck, Im gonna be so hungover at work tomorrow.

LUKE

Me too man.

BRANDON

At least you don't have to look a kid in the face, holding back your own stomach acid.

The men laugh. Alex's head jerks up when she hears the word "kid". She looks at Brandon's face, he begins to turn his head towards her, she snaps her head back to the ground. Keeping her head low she tries her best to scan his body, her eyes stop at his waist where she sees a work ID badge hanging off his belt loop.

Alex pulls her phone out of her back pocket and opens the camera app. She slyly zooms into the badge and takes a picture. Pressing the button, her phones camera makes a shutter sound and Brandon looks around, confused.

Alex quickly stands up, grabs her keyboard bag and turns around - her back towards the group of men. Brandon notices the back of her figure and the keyboard bag. Almost immediately, the train comes to a stop at Alex's station, the doors open, and she walks off the train.

INT. ALEX'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Alex runs into her apartment, angrily throwing the keyboard bag to the ground. She runs into her bedroom and sits on her bed, frantically opening her laptop. She pulls her phone out of her back pocket and opens the photo app and clicks on the photo she took of the mans ID badge on the subway. She zooms into the badge where she sees a headshot of him and text underneath that reads, "Brandon Ainsworth - Softee Ice Cream Trucks - Brooklyn - Route 7".

Alex types his name into Google. The first link brings her to the Softee Ice Cream Trucks website where it lists the exact same information that is on his badge. Alex nods her head back in defeat. Looking back down at the screen she sees an advertisement for Softee Ice Cream Trucks that promotes a map to, "Find a Softee truck near you!" She clicks on the ad and is redirected to a page that shows a map of the greater NYC area. Smiling ice cream heads indicate where all the trucks can be found around the city.

She drags her curser on top of the ice cream heads. As her cursor passes by a truck in Queens it lights up with more information, "Softee Ice Cream Trucks - Queens - Route 3 - Northern BLVD & 93rd St".

Her eyes light up in realizing she has the ability to find Brandon's truck. Her cursor makes its way into Brooklyn, hovering over every smiling ice cream head in the greater Brooklyn area. She clicks on multiple trucks that are the wrong route number, dismisses them and continues searching.

Finally, her cursor clicks on a truck on the corner of Brooklyn Ave and St. Marks Ave. The information bubble boldly advertises, "Softee Ice Cream Trucks - Brooklyn - Route 7 - Brooklyn Ave & St. Marks Ave.

Alex opens her phone again to look at the badge and compare the information. It's the correct truck. She stares at the screen in relief, and takes a deep breath.

EXT. THE STREETS OF BROOKLYN - DAY

Alex walks the streets of Brooklyn in a long trench coat and scarf. Her hair is done and she has on a full face of makeup. She holds her phone in her hand with the Softee Ice Cream Trucks tracking map open. She haphazardly glances down at the screen, using it to guide her in the right direction. Turning a corner she sees the truck. Brandon is reaching out of its window, handing a child an ice cream cone. Alex pulls her scarf closer to her face and quickly walks past the truck.

She wraps around the back of the truck and sits on the curb adjacent. She uses her phone camera to look at her hair and makeup. Smacking her lips together she notices she needs more lipgloss. Pulling her purse onto her lap, she opens it up to look for some. On top of the pile of things in her bag we see pepper spray. She pushes it to the side and keeps digging.

She is suddenly stopped by the sound of a slamming door. Looking to her left she sees Brandon dumping a bucket of dirty water into a sewer drain. Alex quickly stands up and brushes herself off, making her way to Brandon.

ALEX

Excuse me sir-

Brandon turns to notice her.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Uh yeah hi! Um - I'm lost. One moment I was in Times Square and the next second I was here.

(beat)

I'm visiting from out of town, I don't know my way around the city. I'm just super confused.

BRANDON

Oh uh sure. Where do you need to get back to?

ALEX

Manhattan, Midtown.

Brandon looks around trying to remember where the nearest Manhattan bound subway station is.

BRANDON

You're gonna need to walk 3 blocks over to Kingston Ave Station. Take the Harlem Bound 3 train for-

ALEX

I'm so forgetful. I know it's quite the ask, but would you be able to walk me over? If I take two steps toward that station I'll immediately forget where to go and come running back to you!

Alex flirtily places her hand on Brandon's shoulder. They both laugh.

BRANDON

I'm sorry but I'm working right now-

Brandon signals to the ice cream truck.

ALEX

I'll wait. I'm not in a rush.

Alex eyes him up and down.

ALEX (CONT'D)

You seem like a guy I can trust. And the sun is starting to set. I'd hate to have to navigate these streets all alone. You'd help me, wouldn't you?

Alex bats her eyes and sinks into her scarf, trying her hardest to look vulnerable. Brandon half bites his lip while thinking.

BRANDON

Sure. Of course, why not. I'm off in an hour. I have to park the truck in that alleyway down the street.

Brandon points to an empty alleyway parking lot.

BRANDON (CONT'D)

Wait over there for me?

Alex silently nods and smiles, staring at Brandon.

ALEX
I'll see ya then.

Alex turns and her face instantly drops. She begins walking in the direction of the alleyway, we see Brandon standing still, watching as she walks away.

EXT. PARKING LOT ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Alex sits on a curb in an alleyway surrounded by multiple ice cream trucks. Her foot taps away anxiously. Headlights suddenly illuminate the alleyway as a truck pulls in. Alex sees its Brandon and stands up, fluffing up her hair and pulling her purse tighter to her shoulder.

Brandon parks the truck and turns off the ignition. Exiting the truck he slowly walks over to Alex as he puts the truck keys in his pocket.

BRANDON
You actually waited.

ALEX
Of course.

Brandon is now face to face with Alex.

BRANDON
We can start, walking this way-

Brandon signals to the end of the alleyway. Alex grabs his wrist.

ALEX
Why the rush?

Alex pulls Brandon's wrist to her face. She uses her fingers to trace the veins on his hand.

BRANDON
You seemed pretty frantic about getting back.

ALEX
I was. I just- I wanna get to know you a little bit first. I mean, you're the gentleman who so kindly agreed to get me home safely. It's the least I could do.

Brandon is obviously flustered and blushing.

BRANDON

Wow I mean...I guess you're right.
What do you wanna know....about me?

ALEX

Are you from here?

BRANDON

Yeah, just the borough above.

Alex looks at Brandon confused.

BRANDON (CONT'D)

Oh right. You're not from here.
Queens. I'm from Queens.

Alex smiles and nods, keeping long strong eye contact with Brandon. Brandon gets lost in her eyes and clears his throat, looking away once he realizes he's been staring.

BRANDON (CONT'D)

-And you? Where- Where are you
from?

ALEX

Michigan.

The two stare at each other nodding their heads in silence. After a few beats of silence Alex leans in to kiss Brandon, he reciprocates. Alex places her hands on the back of Brandon's head. Still kissing, Brandon walks Alex into a wall, pinning his arms beside her head. Alex removes a hand from the back of Brandon's head and slowly creeps it into her purse until her hand has a hold on the pepper spray.

Using her body, she flips the two of them around so Brandon's back is against the wall and holds the pepper spray in front of his face and uses her other hand to cover his mouth.

BRANDON (MUFFLED)

What the fu-

Alex presses her hand harder into his mouth.

ALEX

I don't want to hurt you, but I'll
use this if I have to. Do you
understand?

Brandons eyes widen, terrified he nods his head. Alex loosens her hand over his mouth.

ALEX (CONT'D)

I know what you do on the weekends
with your boys, at the bars.
Tormenting girls, convincing them
that they want it, that they want
you.

BRANDON (MUFFLED)

What the fuck are you talking
about??

Alex switches the nozzle to open on the pepper spray.

ALEX

Last night. The girl, her eyes
rolling back.

(beat)

You buy girls drinks as flattery so
you can slyly drop in a pill and
reach a hand up their skirt on the
dance floor just to discard of
their blacked out bodies in the
bathroom stall.

Alex pauses to catch her breath.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Admit it and I'll let you go.
Promise to never fuck with a woman
ever again.

Brandon stares at Alex, eyes wide. His eyes start to soften
as he realizes something. Alex senses he may say something
and softens her hand on his mouth.

BRANDON

I know you. You were on our train.
You're the busker.

ALEX

That's Mozart to you.

Brandon uses his knee to kick Alex in the stomach. She falls
to the floor wheezing. The pepper spray goes flying. Brandon
begins to run away. On the ground Alex reaches for the bottom
of Brandon's jeans, pulling the pant leg hard, causing him to
trip and fall. Using her last bit of strength, she heaves
herself up with her arms and crawls after Brandon's crawling
away body. She sees the pepper spray laying on the ground
beside him and picks it up.

She crawls ontop of his back and pulls his hair by the scalp.
Turning her head away she fires the pepper spray into his
eyes.

Brandon, screaming takes his hand and swipes the pepper spray out of hers, sending it flying across the asphalt. Alex quickly stands up to run. Before she can even fully stand up Brandon pushes her to the ground. Alex looks up at Brandon now standing over her body, she tries to crawl away on her back, still wheezing for air.

BRANDON

You think you're the hero of some type of game huh? You once encountered a shitty guy and suddenly you thought you could take us down?

ALEX

I'm just like the girls you fuck with. And you're just like the man that fucked with me. You're evil. Pure evil.

Alex continues to crawl back as Brandon slowly walks over her.

BRANDON (LAUGHING)

HA! I'm evil? You just fucking maced me.

ALEX

You're a rapist.

BRANDON

I WAS DRUNK! SHE WAS DRUNK! WE WERE FLIRTING AND THEN WE HOOKED UP!

ALEX (SMILING)

You truly are Mr. Softee...huh?

Brandon lunges forward on top of Alex and begins choking her. Alex panicked, flays her arms around her in search for the pepper spray. Brandon is using all his strength, his face turns as red as his eyes. Alex's face is turning purple. Alex's eyes dart to her sides as she looks for anything to save her. She sees the pepper spray is too far away. On one last glance she notices a glass shard from a broken beer bottle.

As quietly as possible, she pulls the glass closer to her hand. With her hand fully wrapped around it she takes it and stabs it into Brandons neck.

He gargles on his bloodied wheezing breathe. His blood splatters onto Alex's chest and face. Taking his last breathe, Brandon's blood shot eyes roll into the back of his head before he fully collapses on top of Alex.

Alex lays frozen still for awhile trying to take in what just happened. She lets Brandon's limp body lay on top of her as she takes panicked breathes. After some time, Alex realizes he really is dead. She needs to flee.

Pushing Brandon's body off of her she gets up and looks around panicked, considering what she should do. Her eyes naturally land on the numerous ice cream trucks. She gets an idea and looks back at Brandon's dead body. Crouching down she digs into Brandon's side pocket and takes the trucks keys.

Alex rushes into the ice cream truck, puts the key into the ignition and drives off.

INT. ICE CREAM TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Alex speeds the truck onto the road, she doesn't know where she's going, but she knows she needs to get far away from here.

As she's speeding away, she hears doors continuously slamming into each other. She looks into the rearview mirror and notices the back doors are wide open.

ALEX

SHIT!

Alex pulls over to the side of the road. She runs through to the back of the truck, slamming the back doors shut and starts running back to the drivers seat.

CHILD

Excuse me-

Alex turns her head to follow the sound. She sees a CHILD waiting outside of the order window.

CHILD (CONT'D)

Can I please get a swirl cone -

The child looks up at Alex and sees that she is covered in blood. The child just stares, bewildered. Alex looks down at her clothing and remembers she is covered in Brandon's blood. She fakes laughter not to scare the child.

ALEX

Strawberry sauce. It can get real messy.

CUT TO:

INT. ICE CREAM TRUCK - NIGHT

Alex is driving the ice cream truck on the highway, now at a slower pace. She drives with a blank lifeless stare. As she makes an exit we see streetlights illuminating a dead Coney Island. She begins glancing over onto the rides and boardwalk, considering. Eventually, she pulls over and parks the truck on a random side street. She stands up from the drivers seat and looks to the back of the truck to see the mess of all the fallen ice cream equipment from her reckless driving.

Her eyes suddenly bounce to the service window and the black metal box underneath it.

Stepping closer, Alex realizes it's a cash register with a key hanging out of the keyhole. She turns the key and opens the register. She takes a few moments with the money, her eyes gazing over it, taking it all in.

Soon enough, her hands reach inside grabbing as much cash as possible. She stuffs the cash into the pockets of her blood stained clothing and walks out the back of the truck, closing the doors behind her.

EXT. CONEY ISLAND BOARDWALK - MOMENTS LATER

Alex is walking the vacant Coney Island boardwalk. She walks with her coat pulled tight around her as the wind off the ocean blows her hair every which way.

As she is walking, she notices a brightly painted boardwalk piano and begins to approach it. Sitting down, she pulls the key cover off the keys and begins playing the song from earlier in the subway station. Her blood covered face stays blank and lifeless. She gives a subtle glance to her pregnant stomach as a single tear falls down her face.

THE END.