

Mouse

By

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Loosely Based on Jean Paul Sartre's "No Exit"

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EXT. THE VOID - NIGHT

A CLOWN, 50, a man dressed in a big trench coat, bald, only his face paint and red nose signifies he's a clown. He is floating in a total black pit. He stares intently and grabs the void (the camera) by the throat.

INT. KELLEY'S BEDROOM - DAY

KELLEY, 25, a woman with short black dyed hair and various small tattoos on her arms wakes up from a nightmare. She puts her hands around her neck. She puts on her circle framed glasses and gets out of bed. Kelley starts putting on her supermarket uniform. The clock reads 4:00. Kelley reaches for her phone.

INT. KELLEY AND JOHN'S APARTMENT (LIVING SPACE) - DAY

It's a small apartment space; the kitchen and the living room are just one big room. The apartment is well kept, the walls are covered in art house movie posters and concert photos. JOHN, 25, a man with unkempt hair is dressed in baggy thrifted clothing stained with different color paints. He is watching TV on the couch. Kelley opens a drawer under the countertop. There's a dead mouse in a mouse trap.

KELLEY

Awwwww. Poor guy.

John is still fixated on the TV.

JOHN

What?

KELLEY

There's a dead baby mouse.

JOHN

I knew those fuckers were in here.
You're not going to give him a mouse funeral?

KELLEY

If I had the time I would. The little guy deserves one. Do you think he'll make it to mousey heaven?

John finally looks over at Kelley.

JOHN

I don't buy the whole "animal specific

heaven thing" Kell. I like to think that if there's a heaven, its one big zoo.

John uses air quotes when he says "animal specific heaven thing." Kelley throws the trapped mouse in the trashcan.

JOHN

I thought you quit Thursday?

KELLEY

I put in a two week notice, John. It's what you do when you work for a real boss.

JOHN

My Papa John is more of an overseer than a boss. Want me to pick you up later for your last Geissler's joyride?

Kelley grabs her raincoat and opens the door.

KELLEY

I'll get Lee to hold down the fort around nine.

JOHN

Fo' sho'. We can crash here for a bit, then I'll drive you back to hell.

INT. LOBBY TO KELLEY AND JOHN'S APT. - DAY

MRS. DEAL, 55, older woman who runs the cheap apartment building. She sits behind a small desk in the dusty lobby. She wears a cross necklace. She is holding a picture of her and her husband. She is red and crying.

INT. MR. AND MRS. DEAL'S BEDROOM (DREAM) - NIGHT

MR. DEAL, 55, an older man, is naked in bed with a younger woman. Mrs. Deal enters the room and pulls out a small gun from her pocket.

EXT. NUCLEAR TEST SITE - DAY

Stock footage of a nuclear blast/mushroom cloud.

INT. LOBBY TO KELLEY AND JOHN'S APT. - DAY

Kelley rushes across the room and heads for the door. Mrs.

Deal sets the photo down and wipes her face. She smiles at Kelley.

KELLEY

Have a good one Mrs. Deal!

Kelley exits the lobby. Mrs. Deal grabs a full bottle of pills from her drawer and pops three of them.

INT. BUS - DAY

Kelley sits in the middle of the bus as it drives through the city. She's listening to ambient music from her earbuds. The drone-y music is getting louder. She starts to fall asleep.

EXT. THE VOID - NIGHT

Kelley starts floating. We see a mouse scurry through the void. It stops in front of Kelley. The mouse holds a note in its mouth. Kelley freezes up and starts to twitch as the mouse climbs up her leg and places the note in her hand. We hear a loud thud.

INT. BUS - DAY

Kelley abruptly wakes up as the bus stops. Next to Kelley is the clown. Kelley can't make eye contact and starts shaking. He drops a white note in front of Kelley, not looking at her, and gets off the bus.

Kelley picks up the note. The note reads: "How long do we have left? How do we know what happens next?" Kelley looks shook. She crumples the note and leaves it on the floor of the bus. She gets off the bus in a hurry.

INT. GEISSLER'S - DAY

Kelley sits behind the register and watches the small amount of customers browse the supermarket shelves. She notices a SHOPPER, 45, a woman wearing a blue dress, down a nearby aisle crying on the phone. She falls to her knees sobbing. Kelley looks away.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

An OLD LADY, 80, is sleeping in a hospital bed using a breathing tube. Her chest moves up and down with each breath. A MALE NURSE, 50, is reading a gossip magazine in the corner. He flips the page. The old lady's chest stops moving. The nurse looks up from his magazine and rushes to the bed. We hear the hospital flat line.

MALE NURSE
Nonononononono! DOC!

INT. GEISLER'S - DAY

GREG, 40, a man who is Kelley's manager, slender and slightly balding helps the shopper up from the floor. Greg walks over to Kelley.

GREG
Whatever you do Kelley, don't start with that customer. I think she's got problems.

KELLEY
Or she's just upset.

GREG
That's besides the point, just make sure she doesn't cause another scene.

KELLEY
And how am I supposed to do that Greg?

GREG
(sarcastically)
You've read the job description, just be nice. Try to smile.

KELLEY
As opposed to me being a total bitch?

Greg holds his head and sighs.

GREG
Ju-... Never mind. Lee's break is up.
Make sure he gets back to work.

Greg walks away. The shopper, cleaning herself up, moves her cart to Kelley's register and starts unloading her items. Kelley can't make eye contact with her.

KELLEY
So did you find everything you need today?

The lady starts quietly sobbing again. She sniffles her snot back.

SHOPPER
(at a whisper)

Yup.

Kelley finishes scanning her items.

KELLEY
The total comes to \$11.24 today.

The shopper starts crying again and reaches for her wallet.

SHOPPER
(tearing up)
That was her birthday.

Kelley puts her head down and finishes the transaction.

INT. GEISLER'S - NIGHT (LATER)

Kelley is spinning quarters on top of her register. We see the window outside revealing its night time and raining. LEE, 30, a man wearing a similar uniform as Kelley; is on his phone at the bagging area next to Kelley. We hear the rain outside. The store is empty.

KELLEY
He kept asking to see the manager but Greg was in the break room, fucking asleep!

LEE
Buddy's been in the dumps lately. I heard his Uncle just passed.

KELLEY
Well I've only got another week. He can have all of the passes he wants. I just hate old fucks who say I can't do my job.

Kelley looks at the clock that reads 9:00

KELLEY
Leeeee...I think I'm gonna go on my "break," if that's ok with you.

Kelley throws up air quotes when she says "break."

LEE
You know I don't care what you do. Just be back at 11 to help me close.

KELLEY
Love ya' Lee!

Kelley grabs her coat from under the counter and walks to the exit door.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Kelley stands on the sidewalk next to a homeless man sitting on the curb. Kelley sees John in a black raincoat pull up to the sidewalk in an old Toyota. John reaches over and opens the passenger door.

JOHN
Heyyy party people! Are you two ready
for a goooood time?

Kelley looks confused until she turns and looks at the homeless man who is unamused by John's comment. Kelley holds her head, chuckles and gets in the car. They drive off. The homeless man coughs then signs the cross on himself.

INT. JOHN'S TOYOTA - NIGHT

John and Kelley are driving around the city. No one is out on a Monday night. Kelley and John exchange laughter. Kelley is holding a Heineken bottle and starts pouring some into John's mouth. John pretends to spew the drink on the windshield.

JOHN
(a la Dennis Hopper)
HEINEKEN! FUCK THAT SHIT! PABST BLUE
RIBBON!!

Kelley and John laugh. Kelley gives John another can of Pabst. He holds the steering wheel with his knee and cracks open the can.

EXT. THE VOID - NIGHT

Everything is black. Total audible silence.

EXT. THE STREET - NIGHT

The clown stands on the sidewalk and hears John's car coming. He quickly jumps in the middle of the road. John's car hits the clown and the clown vanishes in thin air.

INT. JOHN'S TOYOTA - NIGHT

Kelley notices the clown in the road and freezes up. She

can't move. When the car hits the clown, John isn't paying attention and the car gets bumped up like they ran over a dog. John immediately sobers up and looks back and doesn't see anything in the road. John stares at the road again and sighs in relief. Kelley is still in shock.

JOHN

Must've been a mouse. (a beat) What's the matter Kell?

KELLEY

(In a tiny voice)

I think you just hit a clown...

John giggles.

JOHN

You and those fucking clowns.

John puts his hand back and grabs another drink. He gives it to Kelley. Kelley cracks the can and takes a good gulp. She closes her eyes and takes a deep breath.

INT. LOBBY TO KELLEY AND JOHN'S APT. - NIGHT

Mrs. Deal is sitting behind the desk like before. All is quiet except for the ambience of the rain and the city outside. In one hand, she is clutching an empty pill bottle, and in the other she starts rubbing her gold cross necklace. She is physically shaking like she has a bad chill. Kelley and John stumble into the lobby intoxicated. They enter mid conversation.

JOHN

I told you. Joni was way too Catholic for me. She'd have me crucified if she watched the shit I'm into.

KELLEY

I think she'd fucking love Salo, John. It'd totally destroy her stupid catholic block.

JOHN

Makes no difference to me, I went crazy in her catholic block.

Kelley punches John in the arm but can't help it and they both laugh at his dumb sex joke. Mrs. Deal can't believe what she's hearing and starts sweating profusely, muttering incoherent words under her breath.

INT. HELL (IN MRS. DEALS MIND) - NIGHT

Mrs. Deal envisions Kelley and John being burned alive in a lava pit. Their voices are distorted and their screams are shrill. The drugs are really getting to Mrs. Deal.

INT. HALLWAY TO KELLEY AND JOHN'S APT. - NIGHT

Kelley and John continue to walk down the hall.

KELLEY

Then god came down and gave this poor Job guy the worst week of his life!

JOHN

I just don't get Christianity. How're you gonna punish such a nice guy? I'd prefer an afterlife of just swimming and fucking in the void. Maybe it'd be a nice place to relax and escape the pressures of "society."

John smirks and throws his hands up like he's fixing a tinfoil hat on his head when he says "society."

KELLEY

There's nothing to get John. I wouldn't waste my time overthinking what dead people think about life. I fucking hate church.

Kelley and John arrive at their door. John grabs his keys from his pocket and fumbles around with them, dropping them on the ground and laughing in a goofy drunk way. Kelley laughs and picks them up and unlocks the door.

INT. KELLEY AND JOHN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

John takes off his coat and hangs it up on the back of the door exposing his "'In God We Trust' by Dead Kennedy's" T shirt. Kelley stretches by the door.

KELLEY

Before I go back to work, how adventurous are you feeling right now?

JOHN

What are you implying?

KELLEY

I'm implying that you take a gander at

the "communion bread" I got from
father Lee.

Kelley throws up air quotes and pulls out a Ziploc bag with
edible gummies. John laughs.

JOHN

You still got another couple hours at
Geissler's Kell. You expect to
"provide excellent customer service"
when you're crossed as fuck?

KELLEY

The way I'm seeing it, I only got a
lil' buzz and I already put my two
weeks in.

JOHN

(a beat)

Why the hell not?

John and Kelley take the edibles. Kelley finally takes off
her coat and crashes on the couch.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

ATTORNEY, 50, a man questions Kelley on the stand in front of
a relatively empty court room.

ATTORNEY

Then what happened...

Kelley is overwhelmed and sweats.

KELLEY

After we got home I can't remember.

EXT. THE VOID - NIGHT

Total blackness and silence.

INT. KELLEY AND JOHN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Kelley and John are blasting loud noise rock. John imitates
thrashing on his air guitar as Kelley dances out of rhythm.

INT. LOBBY TO KELLEY AND JOHN'S APT. - NIGHT

Mrs. Deal hears the harsh noise and screaming from down the
hall and signs the cross on herself. We hear a loud bang from
Kelley and John's apartment and Mrs. Deal storms over to

their door.

INT. HALLWAY TO KELLEY AND JOHN'S APT. - NIGHT

Mrs. Deal starts pounding on Kelley and John's door. The music is still blasting

MRS. DEAL
 YOU WILL KEEP IT DOWN OR I'LL BE
 FORCED TO EVICT YOU! IF THERE'S ONE
 THING I CAN'T STAND, IT'S NOISE!

The music is turned off. We hear Kelley and John start giggling. Mrs. Deal takes a deep breath and starts to turn around. The music turns back on, even louder. Mrs. Deal storms over to the desk.

INT. LOBBY TO KELLEY AND JOHN'S APT. - NIGHT

Mrs. Deal pulls out a drawer from her desk which contains a bible and a small gun. She pushes the bible to the side and grabs the gun.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

ATTORNEY
 So as I understand, you have no
 recollection, if any, of attacking
 Mrs. Deal that evening?

KELLEY'S ATTORNEY, 60, a tired man who should be objecting to the question is too zoned out to make a comment. Kelley stares at the attorney.

INT. KELLEY AND JOHN'S APARTMENT (HALLUCINATION) - NIGHT

Kelley is pinned on the ground by a human sized mouse. With a free hand, she reaches for the clicker.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Kelley looks down and shakes her head.

KELLEY
 I just have no idea.

INT. KELLEY AND JOHN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

John can't control his laughter and starts cackling over the music while Kelley starts slapping his arm to get the remote to the stereo. We hear Mrs. Deal start slamming on the door.

KELLEY

John cut the shit! Give me the...
the...

JOHN

The clicker?

John laughs again at himself.

KELLEY

It's not funny dumb ass! She's gonna
kill us!

MRS. DEAL (O.S.)

IF YOU DONT OPEN THIS DOOR, I'M GOING
TO RIP YOUR LITTLE HEADS OFF!

John finds this hilarious and gets up to open the door,
dropping the remote between the couch cushions. Kelley
scrambles to dig it out.

INT. DOORWAY OF KELLEY AND JOHN'S APT. - NIGHT

John opens the door to find a beat red Mrs. Deal drenched in
sweat heavily breathing. The two share an awkward silence as
John takes a second to collect the whole image. Mrs. Deal
notices the sacrilegious t shirt and looks up at John. Kelley
finally turns off the music. Mrs. Deal pulls out the small
gun from her pocket.

EXT. THE VOID - NIGHT

John floats in the empty space and silence with a surprised
look on his face.

INT. KELLEY AND JOHN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

John's body lies at the doorway covered in blood from the
bullet hole in his head. Mrs. Deal's body lies face up in
front of Kelley who is holding herself in the fetal position
at the corner of the room crying. Mrs. Deal is bleeding out
of her mouth from the stereo remote lodged in it. The remote
in her mouth keeps raising the volume of the music.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

THE JUDGE, 60, a woman who looks like she's had a long day,
fixes her glasses.

THE JUDGE

And your closing argument, the

defense?

Kelley's attorney is fast asleep at the table.

ATTORNEY.

I think we're done your honor.

Kelley mournfully looks down. She looks up to fix her glasses. She sees a mouse scurry across the floor into a small hole in the wall.

INT. KELLEY'S PARENTS HOUSE (IN THE KITCHEN) - DAY

A mouse scurries out of a hole in the wall. NEIL and RACHEL, both 55 and look reminiscent of your typical suburban dad and mom. They sit across from each other in a middle-class kitchen. Nothing notable on the walls except a cross above the fridge where there's a picture of Kelley, 7, dressed like a clown on the freezer door. Neil is eating breakfast and reading the paper. Rachel is doing a crossword puzzle.

RACHEL

Oh! Did I tell you Kelley called the other night?

NEIL

What?

RACHEL

Nothing Neil. Kelley called. She had a nightmare.

NEIL

Oh. That's nice. She still misses us.

RACHEL

I just hope she's staying out of trouble. John always rubbed me the wrong way.

NEIL

I hear ya' hun.

Kelley's Dad sips his coffee and flips the page of the newspaper. His eyes widen. He puts down the coffee cup.

NEIL

Holy shit...