

Split Up

By Mark Cantan

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0861531249
markcantan.com
mcantan@gmail.com

FADE IN

EXT. A PIER - DAY.

BRIAN stands opposite KAREN. Both are in their 30s/40s. BRIAN is dressed in a waterproof jacket and sensible jumper. KAREN is wearing fashionable clothes, perhaps not best designed for outdoors. They look at each other. A conclusion has been made, though they haven't said it out loud.

BRIAN
...Maybe we should go our separate ways.

KAREN
(Smiles sadly)
Yeah. I agree.

BRIAN
We're just moving in different directions.

KAREN
Exactly. It just wasn't meant to be.

BRIAN
Yeah.
Thank you, Karen.

KAREN
Thank you, Brian.

They hesitantly hug. Then nod to each other again.

BRIAN
Well...

BRIAN starts to make a move and KAREN nods and starts walking in the same direction.

The pier is long. They walk in silence a couple of metres apart. They don't look at each other. They look in opposite directions trying to make it look nonchalant.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

They reach the end of the pier.

They look at each other and nod again. BRIAN walks away. KAREN takes out her phone.

BRIAN reaches his car. He bleeps it unlocked. But then stops. He looks back in the direction of KAREN.

She's still standing at the side of the road. She looks frustratedly at her phone.

BRIAN debates it. Eventually he comes to a decision. He starts walking back towards Karen. Behind him his car door opens.

KAREN is looking around confused when BRIAN reaches her.

BRIAN
Uh...do you want a lift?

KAREN
What?

BRIAN
We drove here together. I can't leave you here.

KAREN
I think there's a bus. I just can't...
(She looks at her phone again)

BRIAN
It's fine. Come on. I'll drop you home.

KAREN thinks about it but then agrees.

KAREN
Okay, yeah, thanks.

INT. CAR - DAY.

Clunk. They shut the car doors, sitting in the front seats. There's an awkward silence. BRIAN coughs and starts the engine. He starts to reverse out of the space and starts driving away.

BRIAN
It's nice though.

KAREN
Hah?

BRIAN
The pier. Is looking nice today.

KAREN
Yeah, absolutely.

Silence.

KAREN (CONT)

The park is nice too. Maybe we should have gone there. There might have been a band playing.

BRIAN

Yeah, absolutely. We always go to the pier though.

KAREN

Yeah.

(Silence)

Yeah.

They sit in silence again for a while.

KAREN

I wonder if-

BRIAN

What is that smell? Do you smell something?

Suddenly DOMER jumps up from the back seat. His hair is messed up and greasy, he wears a ragged trench coat and brandishes a gun of some kind. BRIAN and KAREN scream. DOMER points a gun at BRIAN.

KAREN

Jesus!

BRIAN

Oh my god!

KAREN

Fuck!

BRIAN

Jesus!

DOMER tries to quiet them but they ignore him.

DOMER

Shhh! It's okay. Be quiet!

KAREN

Oh my god!

BRIAN

Fucking hell!

KAREN
Brian!

BRIAN
I know! It's okay!

KAREN
Watch the road!

BRIAN
I'm watching the road!

DOMER
Quiet!

DOMER points the gun again and they go silent.

BRIAN
(Quietly)
I'm watching the road.

KAREN
(Quietly)
Good, that's good.

DOMER
I'm here to help.

BRIAN and KAREN look at each like DOMER is even more crazy.

DOMER (CONT)
Left here.

BRIAN complies.

DOMER is checking behind them.

DOMER (CONT)
Are we being followed?

BRIAN
(Looks confused)
I don't know.

KAREN
Look in the mirrors.

BRIAN
Okay, okay.

BRIAN studies the mirrors. He comes to a conclusion.

BRIAN (CONT)
I've no idea. I don't know.

DOMER
Break this light.

BRIAN
I can't just break the light.

KAREN
Just do what he says Brian.

DOMER
Floor it.

BRIAN
Oh, Jesus.

BRIAN accelerates. He winces as he does and waves apologetically to the other cars.

DOMER checks behind them.

DOMER
Good. Keep driving.

EXT. CAR - NIGHT

They drive down a warehouse filled lane in an industrial part of town.

DOMER
Pull over.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

They come to a stop.

DOMER (CONT)
Wait for me here.

KAREN and BRIAN nod.

DOMER gets out, scanning the environs as he does.

KAREN watches him leave. BRIAN keeps his eyes straight ahead.

KAREN
Right, let's go.

BRIAN

What?

KAREN

Let's get out of here.

BRIAN

He told us to stay.

KAREN

So?! He's a maniac, we need to get out of here!

BRIAN

Karen, he's got a gun!

They both take a breath to calm themselves.

KAREN

That's exactly my point. He has a gun so we should get out of here.

BRIAN

Yes. But what if he catches up with us?

KAREN

We're in a car. He's on foot. How's he going to...?

BRIAN

He might be fast. He looked, like, eager.

KAREN

Brian, I think we are missing our opportunity here. Would you *please* drive?

BRIAN looks around nervously.

BRIAN

Where is he?

KAREN

He went into some building over there.

BRIAN breathes deeply, psyching himself up.

BRIAN

Okay, okay, okay.

KAREN is looking out the right side of the car.

KAREN

He's gone. He's gone. You're fine.

BRIAN

Okay, just.

KAREN

He's gone. He's nowhere in sight.

(Stops herself from getting too angry)

Just take your time and hurry up.

BRIAN

Yeah. I just need to-!

Clump. DOMER gets in the left hand side of the car.

BRIAN and KAREN go completely still, staring out in front of the car like nothing was happening.

KAREN

(Under her breath)

That's...a shame.

DOMER

Drive!

BRIAN pulls away, making sure to click on the indicator and check his wing mirrors as he does.

BRIAN

(Under his breath)

Well, I told you.

DOMER is distracted, fiddling with a device in the back of the car. He plugs things in and switches pieces around.

KAREN

(Through gritted teeth)

We could have.

BRIAN

(Through gritted teeth)

We never would have.

KAREN

If you'd just.

BRIAN

I tried. There wasn't.

The device in DOMER's hands lights up. It glows in an unearthly way.

KAREN and BRIAN catch sight of it. Their mouths drop. They exchange glances.

KAREN
(Mouthing the words)
What is that?

BRIAN
(Mouthing the words)
I don't know. How would I know?

The car slowly rolls to a stop as BRIAN is distracted.

DOMER seems to be making some calculations. He looks up.

DOMER
Novu is closing in.

BRIAN
R-right. Is that a bad thing-

Suddenly KAREN opens her door and runs from the car. BRIAN and DOMER turn to see her leave. Then they turn to each other. BRIAN thinks for a moment. Then he runs too.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

KAREN flees. BRIAN runs after her.

BRIAN
Karen! Wait!

KAREN
I'm not going to wait! I'm trying to escape!

BRIAN
Yeah, fair point!

They run into a lane.

EXT. LANE - CONT

They run down the lane, BRIAN has caught up with KAREN.

KAREN
Why are you following me?

BRIAN

I don't know. You just seemed to know where you were going!

KAREN

I've no idea where I'm going!

BRIAN

Good point. Maybe we should split up!

KAREN

Well, we wouldn't have to-

(Bites her tongue)

Yes, good thinking.

They're approaching a junction.

BRIAN

You go left and I'll go right.

KAREN

Good!

They reach the junction and both of them go right.

BRIAN

I thought you were going to go left.

KAREN

Yeah, I just...I didn't.

BRIAN

Karen, you need to figure out a system for remembering left and right. We agreed on this!

KAREN

Alright, alright, yes! I know! Now isn't the time.

BRIAN

Exactly. That's why we need to think about these things beforehand.

They reach another junction. They stop and look at each other.

BRIAN

Good luck.

KAREN

You too.

They hug and run in opposite directions. We hear their footsteps disappearing into the distance. There is a pause. Their footsteps approach again. They run back into the junction.

BRIAN

That way's blocked. There's spikes and a van on fire.

KAREN

There's a big crazy dog down there. It's crazy.

They look around. There's nowhere else to go.

Eventually they look up at the wall beside them.

BRIAN

We can't. We could get hurt.

KAREN

We're going to get hurt staying here.

BRIAN

We don't know what's up there?

KAREN

Whatever it is is better than that maniac.

Reluctantly, Brian nods his agreement. KAREN gives BRIAN a boost, then he pulls her up.

EXT. ROOF - NIGHT.

They find themselves on a roof. They take a moment to catch their breath. KAREN looks down into the darkness.

KAREN

Do you reckon he's still coming after us?

BRIAN

Let's not take that chance.

They move off.

They clamber over chimneys and air vents. KAREN moves faster than BRIAN.

She jumps off objects.

While BRIAN carefully climbs down.

BRIAN
Be careful, Karen.

KAREN
I am being careful.

BRIAN
You're going too fast! This is unfamiliar terrain.

KAREN
We need to move! If we stay-

KAREN slips and falls over. She lets out a yelp of pain.

BRIAN runs to her.

BRIAN
Are you okay?

KAREN
I think I've twisted my ankle.

BRIAN pointedly doesn't say anything.

BRIAN
...okay.

KAREN
Don't!

BRIAN
I'm not! I didn't.

KAREN looks at BRIAN.

BRIAN looks at KAREN.

They wait for the other one to blink.

Eventually BRIAN speaks.

BRIAN
If-

KAREN
You distracted me!

BRIAN

Which wouldn't have mattered if you weren't going so fast!

KAREN

You were going too slow! If I hadn't kept moving you would have stopped for tea and sandwiches!

BRIAN starts searching around the roof.

BRIAN

This is just like at the ice rink. You just charge into things.

KAREN

You've got to go on the rink, Brian. Otherwise it's just land-skating. What are you doing?

BRIAN

I'm looking for something you can use as a crutch.

BRIAN comes back with a small stick.

KAREN

That's not going to work.

BRIAN

I know. I was bringing it back to show you that there's nothing good to use.

BRIAN starts to help KAREN up. He puts her arm over his shoulder to steady her.

KAREN

Why would I need you to show me that there's nothing good to use? You can just tell me, Brian.

They start to move off.

BRIAN

Well, I can't exactly just tell you because...

KAREN

What?

BRIAN

Sometimes you aren't the most aurally based of information gatherers.

KAREN looks at him confused.

KAREN

Are you trying to say that I don't listen to you?

They reach the exit door.

BRIAN

I'm just saying that if you did listen more it might help-

KAREN

Oh for god's sake! Is this why you wanted to break up?! You hate that I act on my instincts, don't you?! Well, I'm sorry that I'm not smart like you!

BRIAN

What?! Is it so wrong to want to stop and think now and again?! Am I boring to you?! That's really why you wanted to break up with me, isn't it?!

KAREN

Boring?! Boring is too kind a word for what you are! You're a statue! Too terrified to live your own life!

KAREN angrily reaches for the door but it opens before she can touch it.

Standing behind the door is a menacing looking woman: NOVU.

BRIAN takes a step back. KAREN is pleased to see her. She moves towards her.

KAREN

Oh, thank god. We're being chased by a-

BRIAN

Karen, don't-!

BRIAN reaches to stop KAREN and NOVU punches him, knocking him out. KAREN looks at her agog.

KAREN
Why would you...?

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

KAREN and BRIAN heads are beside each other facing in opposite directions. BRIAN is unconscious.

KAREN
Brian? Brian, wake up.

They're lying on the ground tied up.

KAREN (CONT)
Brian, are you okay?

BRIAN slowly comes around.

BRIAN
What happened?

BRIAN starts to struggle against the ropes. KAREN is squeezed.

KAREN
Stop! Stop! We're tied together. She tied us together.

BRIAN stops struggling.

BRIAN
Why did she tie us up?

KAREN
I don't know. She's crazy. They're both crazy. We've been kidnapped by two crazy people in the same night. What are the chances of that?

BRIAN
Hmm.

KAREN
What? Are you alright?

BRIAN
No, I was just thinking. Maybe that's Novu. He said something about Novu getting closer, like it was a bad thing.

KAREN
Why didn't she rescue us from him then?

BRIAN
Maybe he was rescuing us from her.

KAREN
What?

BRIAN
He said he was here to help.

KAREN
He's a madman. I'm sure he *does* want to help us by relieving us of the burden of having our hearts inside our own chests.

DOMER appears.

KAREN
(Not sure where to look)
Oh hi.

DOMER
Quickly. There isn't much time.

DOMER starts untying them.

They can finally see eye to eye. They stop and look at each other.

BRIAN
I've been thinking.

KAREN
When?

BRIAN
I'm sorry. I liked going out with you.

KAREN
(Confused)
Okay.

BRIAN
Too much. I was happy.

KAREN
So why'd you want to break up?

BRIAN

Because you always want to keep moving and I was worried that whatever next stage of life we reached wouldn't be as good. So I thought we should end it now before it went any further. Because sooner or later I thought you'd want something else.

KAREN

Yeah.

(Digs deep)

I do keep looking for something else. We've only got one life to live and I'm worried that there might be a better one out there. Even though what I have is pretty good. I guess that's why I wanted to break up with you too.

DOMER has finished untying them. KAREN and BRIAN look at each other with honesty and as if they're fully seeing each other for the first time.

DOMER

We should go.

KAREN

Can you just give us a-

NOVU suddenly jumps in and hits DOMER. DOMER and NOVU start fighting each other.

KAREN and BRIAN watch in horror.

BRIAN

We should help him.

KAREN

Why?

BRIAN

I don't know!

KAREN smiles and nods and they both jump into action.

BRIAN jumps at NOVU but she easily bats him away.

KAREN stops, takes a breath and thinks for a second. She looks around. She spots the device.

KAREN

Brian! The thing! The glowing thing! He must have got it for a reason. Maybe it can help.

BRIAN nods and they run over to it.

BRIAN

How do we work it?

KAREN shrugs. They start punching buttons and moving things around. In the background DOMER continues to fight with NOVU.

BRIAN

Wait!

I think we need to hit all these four buttons at the same time.

KAREN

(Shrugs)

Okay.

BRIAN

3...2...1.

They press down together.

A pulse emanates from the device.

NOVU stops in her tracks. She collapses unconscious.

BRIAN and KAREN stare in amazement.

KAREN

(Looks at BRIAN)

Wow. How did you know how to do that?

BRIAN

I don't know. I was just acting on instinct. I felt like we had to do it together.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

NOVU is unconscious in the boot of Brian's car. DOMER shuts the boot. He looks up at BRIAN and KAREN.

DOMER

Thank you. Your children will be safe now.

DOMER moves quickly to the driver's seat and drives off.

KAREN and BRIAN watch him leave.

KAREN

A weirdly kind of threatening thing to say, wasn't it?

BRIAN

Yeah. Like, I wasn't thinking otherwise. We don't even have kids and now I'm starting to worry about them.

KAREN

Generous of you to give him your car.

BRIAN

He seemed...eager. Y'know? Like he needed to get stuff done.

KAREN

Yeah, I guess I see what you're saying now.

They start to walk off together. They walk for a while and then BRIAN puts his arm around KAREN's shoulder.

FADE OUT

THE END