

# "The Wilding"

37.  
George

Kayla inches closer, reaches out to touch her --

The Student whips around. It's not Gaby Reddings. Just a Senior late for class.

SENIOR  
Don't fucking touch me.

9pgs.

KAYLA  
Sorry, that's my locker.

The Senior pushes past her --

SENIOR  
Whatever, psycho.

Off "psycho" -- Kayla explodes, clawing at the Senior's braids. A ferocity learned from being locked up with violent peers.

Kayla pins the Senior against the lockers, slams her fist into the metal inches from the Senior's face.

BANG. BANG. Over and over. The locker bending with every blow. The Senior shudders with each near miss. Kayla's fist inching closer and closer to her face --

TEACHER (O.S.)  
HEY - HEY --

A couple of TEACHERS grab Kayla from behind, dragging her off the shell-shocked Senior.

INT. DINER -- MORNING

A hole in the wall. Mostly Construction Workers and Cops grabbing coffee before punching in.

George polishes off bacon, eggs, pancakes. The works.

He's sharing a booth with the Wards. Only two coffees in front of them.

George is talking, we get the sense he hasn't stopped since he left the cemetery. The Wards now seriously regretting their invitation.

GEORGE  
-- And that was Jenny, center stage every dance recital, ballet show. Made a helluva Tinkerbelle.

Start →  
#1

1/9

SUSIE  
(suspicious)  
Amazing. Only six years old?

GEORGE  
(recovers)  
Got her involved with the arts from  
an early age... You know the one  
blessing I have, I can talk to her.

RAYMOND  
We always keep our April close too.  
(checks his watch)  
It was a real pleasure, but we have  
to get a start on our day.

GEORGE  
-- No. I don't talk to her in that  
'memory lives on' bullshit way. I  
talk to my Jenny.

George sets the PRECIOUS MOMENTS FIGURINE on the table.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
I can do the same for you.

Susie notices her daughter's figurine --

SUSIE  
Where'd you get that?

GEORGE  
I can talk to April.

SUSIE  
(stunned, realizes)  
You stole that from my child's  
grave?

Outraged, Raymond and Susie stand to leave. Raymond grabs for  
the figurine, but George won't let go of it --

GEORGE  
April made you Christmas presents.  
She knew she wasn't feeling well,  
that she wouldn't make it to  
December.

SUSIE  
(raises voice)  
You little shit, give me that.

More than a few heads turn. George doesn't care --

2/9

GEORGE

The week before April went into St. Judes, she asked you to buy her some glitter - green and red. She wanted extra tubes of the green. That's what she needed them for, your presents.

Stunned, Raymond lets go of the figurine, sinks back down.

RAYMOND

... Had to go to three Krogers to find that damn glitter.

GEORGE

She hid the presents in your house. Not in her usual spot under the blue sofa.

SUSIE

... How are you doing this?

GEORGE

She's asking me to tell you where she hid them... Want me to keep going?

Raymond, losing his shit --

RAYMOND

Jesus Lord Christ.

GEORGE

It's four fifty.

SUSIE

What?

GEORGE

You want me to tell you where to find the last Christmas present April will ever give you, it's four hundred and fifty dollars. Cash.

Raymond doesn't hesitate, empties his wallet.

RAYMOND

I've got seventy and change.

GEORGE

Passed an ATM up the block.

Raymond races out. Susie studies George, not fully convinced.

3/9

GEORGE (CONT'D)

She misses your curly hair, says  
you don't have eyes in the back of  
your head no more.

This lands. An old wound reopening. Her grief raw, ugly.

SUSIE

Speak the truth all you want, but  
what you are, what you're doing,  
it's not right... Felt sorry for  
you, I still do. Using people like  
this, you're sick in the head.

GEORGE

Choir boys and killers all end up  
in the same place. So what's it  
matter what I do?

SUSIE

Your daughter, the ballet, none of  
that's real?

GEORGE

Lady, you don't want what I'm  
selling, there's the door.

Susie sits back down.

Stop

INT. PROLEXA STEARNS -- MORNING

Five PANEL MEMBERS of the INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD gather  
around a communal workspace. They decide for the FDA if  
pharmaceutical studies can move to Phase I, human trials.

The Review Panel flips through research reports.

MARK CLEMENS (60s), the director of the lab, keeps the Review  
Board busy with chitchat. More a suit than a doctor. Smooth,  
great set of teeth -- you could put him in a commercial.

He spots Emily stepping off the elevator, pulls her aside.

MARK

Take the lead, you get in the weeds  
and I'll be here to back you up.  
But this is your show, they want to  
hear from you.

(off her lack of reaction)  
Margaret get you straightened out?

EMILY

Of course...

4/9

INT. MOTEL -- NIGHT

Behind her bullet-proof glass, Tara still texts. George strides in, sets down three fifty in cash.

Start  
#2



GEORGE

Room 12. I'm paying through the end of the month.

TARA

Don't you got to get back to your post?

GEORGE

You want my money or not?

TARA

Heard a commotion coming from 12 last night.

GEORGE

Could've been the gang bang above me or the screaming baby below.

TARA

I got a special ear for property damage. You break anything, that's extra.

GEORGE

AC's busted. You interested in taking care of your property, could start there.

TARA

By the time we get that fixed, you'll be whining about the heater.

Tara takes his money and begins to pack up for the night.

As George turns to go, a TWEAKER barrels in. High and itching to get rowdy. George freezes, focusing on the Tweaker.

TWEAKER

You got a date, beautiful? Moon's full, it's Saturday night.

As Tara grabs her purse and heads out, the Tweaker blocks her in. He's being playful, but still threatening.

TARA

It's Tuesday, so gimme a break, Freddie. My day's been a mile long.

5/9

TWEAKER

Yeah, that's what I meant, Tuesday.  
Actually, I don't get paid til  
Friday, you think you can spot me?

GEORGE (OS)

You coming or what, Tara?

The Tweaker notices George for the first time.

TWEAKER

Oh hey man, what about you? Help me  
out til Friday?

GEORGE

Tell you what, I'll give you twenty  
bucks for that.

George points to what he's been staring at this whole time --  
a rusty HUNTING KNIFE hanging off the Tweaker's belt.

**INT. PARKING LOT, MOTEL -- MOMENTS LATER**

George tosses the Hunting Knife into a dumpster. He walks  
Tara to her car, a few steps behind her.

Tara stops shorts. George almost bumps into her.

TARA

Freddie's harmless. You don't got  
to follow me to my car.

GEORGE

That knife cost me 40 bucks, let me  
enjoy the walk.

TARA

I'm no princess type.

GEORGE

That's what all women say in the  
beginning.

TARA

The beginning? We start something,  
I'll let you know.

GEORGE

No, I was just...

Tara smiles -- she's just giving him a hard time.

6/9

TARA  
Goodnight, George.

George nods goodnight, heads up to his room.

INT. MOTEL -- NIGHT

George changes his undershirt, getting ready for bed.

A KNOCK at his door.

George, not sure if he's really hearing it, stands. Again, KNOCKING.

GEORGE  
(to door)  
Yeah...

No response. Another firm RAP, RAP.

George braces himself and opens the door -- it's Tara with a six-pack of cold beer.

TARA  
Figured I owe you for the walk.

EXT. POOL, MOTEL -- NIGHT

At the pool's edge, George and Tara nurse beers. Their bare feet dangle over the ledge, into the water.

TARA  
You swim?

GEORGE  
Why? You thinking about pushing me in?

TARA  
No way, you don't wanna swim in this pool. Some tweaker jumped off the roof, cracked his skull and bounced right in. Found him the next morning, had to pull him out myself.

GEORGE  
Not one spot on this Earth someone hasn't died. Whole planet's one big graveyard.

Stop

Start →  
#3

7/9

TARA

That's a cheery thought.

George laughs at himself, warming up.

GEORGE

Just saying, a body's no reason to  
waste a perfectly good pool.

WET FOOTSTEPS approach them from behind. George cocks his  
head, but knows better than to turn around.

TARA

It's not superstition folks are  
worried about. Owners wouldn't pay  
to drain it, so I dumped buckets  
and buckets a chlorine in. This  
water'll turn your hair shamrock  
green in under a minute.

George's full attention is on those WET FOOTSTEPS smacking  
against the patio cement, closer and closer to them.

TARA (CONT'D)

You called me Tara... But I never  
told you my name.

George doesn't respond. He can't concentrate on anything but  
the footsteps.

TARA (CONT'D)

(nudges him)

How'd you know that was my name?

George finally turns back to Tara.

GEORGE

Must've heard it.

TARA

(sizing him up)

No, don't think so.

Behind George, a CACAPHONY OF FALLING WATER, like someone  
dripping wet.

George downs his beer in one gulp, sets the bottle aside.  
Tara offers him another beer.

GEORGE

I should turn in.

He stands, eyes glued to the ground.

8/9



TARA

You sure? It's early.

But he keeps going, doesn't even look back. He's trying to avoid something we can't see -- presumably the DEAD TWEAKER.

Tara, confused, watches George hustle back to his room.

Behind her, a soft SPLASH.

She snaps her attention back to the pool -- no one swimming.  
But a few RIPPLES lap against her legs.

END