

94 INT. LILITH'S OFFICE - NIGHT 94

STAN

Okay. So how is this going to work, Lady?

LILITH

Doctor.

STAN

Doctor.

LILITH

Lay down, please-

STAN

I'll sit down if that's okay-

LILITH

We can go deeper if you do-

STAN

Why don't we start with sitting.

Lilith presses a button under the desk- the recorder starts to run.

LILITH

When I offered you a drink- You said you never drank.

STAN

'Cause I don't.

LILITH

But you made it a point of pride. You could have taken the glass and not drunk. You could have said "not right now"- put it aside. But you said it: "Not me. I never drink."

STAN

You can't do mentalism and drink! You've got to be on your toes all the time. When you're "on" you're "on".

LILITH

And you are "on" now?

STAN

I'm always "on", Doctor.

LILITH

Did your father drink?

STAN

He went White Ribbon when I was ten.

LILITH
And before?

He squirms ever so slightly.

STAN
Clearly, before, he did. If you knew
what White Ribbon meant.

LILITH
When I poured my whisky, you winced. Why?

STAN
Did I?

LILITH
Yes.

STAN
That's not something I aim to talk to you
about.

LILITH
The truth, we shook on it.

STAN
I didn't like the way it smelled, is all.

LILITH
You were twelve feet away.

STAN
Well, stuff smelled off to me.

LILITH
How so?

STAN
Smelled like wood alcohol.

LILITH
You've drunk wood alcohol?

STAN
No, not me. Never.

LILITH
Never. That word again. Please lie down- (*beat*)
Please-

Stan does.

STAN

A guy I knew- he tanked up on wood alky and kicked off.

He folds his arms across his chest.

LILITH

What are you thinking about now?

Long beat- he laughs.

STAN

It makes no sense.

LILITH

Take your time.

STAN

Pianos-

LILITH

Elaborate.

STAN

My mother.

LILITH

She played the piano?

STAN

What does this have to do with anything?

LILITH

Did she drink?

Long beat-

STAN

Sure- now and then- like everybody else.

LILITH

Not you. You never drink. (beat)

She was beautiful- your mother?

Lilith walks behind Stan. Runs her fingers over his face.

STAN

To me...

LILITH

Who played the piano, Mr. Carlisle?

STAN

A guy named Humphries- friend with my folks- He was in Vaudeville.

Lilith smiles ever-so-slightly.

LILITH

How old was the man at the carnival- The one that died- What did you say his name was?

STAN

I didn't say. I didn't think I said...

Stan raises his head. Lilith gently guides his head back down.

STAN (CONT'D)

(beat)

Pete...

Lilith lights a cigarette-

LILITH

Pete... how did Pete get the alcohol?

Stan is quiet, then...

STAN

I gave it to him. But it was a mistake-

LILITH

Mistake? What was he to you? Did you admire him?

STAN

Parts of him.

LILITH

I think you pitied him.

STAN

I don't know. He had his fair shake and he blew it.

LILITH

Did Pete teach you things?

STAN

Yes.

LILITH

He was older, wasn't he... He was old enough to be your father-

FLASHES: PETE grabs the book from Stan's hand- STAN opens a window- cold air- his FATHER. Stan sits up.

STAN

I think we've done enough.

LILITH

Did you ever stutter as a child?

STAN

No.

LILITH

You have a slight movement- compulsory movement- your head moves up and down. Ever so slightly... Humphries- was he ever inappropriate or abusive to you as a child?

STAN

Shut your mouth.

LILITH

It's alright, Stanton... answer me...

STAN

Humphries took my mother away because my father wasn't man enough to hold onto her, alright? Bible-spouting hypocrite- selling tall tales about Jesus and a happy afterlife-

LILITH

And what do you sell?

STAN

I'm a hustler. And I know that, I'm on the make but I know it. Get it?

He leaps out of the chair-

STAN (CONT'D)

I am nothing like my old man and I never will be!!

Stan walks to the doors.

LILITH

Never... that word again... We're going to work on that-

Stan exits.