

Fallout

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. QUIET STREET ALLEY - DAY

Snowflakes fall from the sky, down onto a desolate and dank street alley. The air is quiet like that of a gentle breeze. It's winter and the snow is falling hard.

Two walls stand towering above us on either side, and a row of steps lead onto the street at the end of the alley.

And from the street, a YOUNG MAN - all of twenty three years old - walks towards us...

He's on the phone to someone, looking pretty cheerful as he goes.

YOUNG MAN

Oh yeah? What did he say about me?
That I wasn't up to it?

He's cut off by a somewhat older voice - the DAD by the sounds of it...

DAD

No, he said you're good - you just need more experience, that's all.

YOUNG MAN

Dad, I've got all the experience I need, alright, It's called being alive. That's it.

It's clear that the 'smile' of his is actually more of a 'grin'.

DAD

Yeah, well if that's the case, I'd have been made CEO by now.

YOUNG MAN

What's that supposed to mean?...

INT. HOUSE, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The young man's Dad paces back and forth in the kitchen. By the looks of it, it's a kitchen that belongs to a modest working class home.

In the corner, it looks as if a meal is cooking.

He continues making preparations as he holds the phone between his head and shoulder.

YOUNG MAN

Just call him back, alright. Tell him... Tell him I'm sorry I'm not good enough but I really deserve another chance.

DAD
It doesn't work like that Jack...

EXT. QUIET STREET ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

The young man walks further into the desolate alleyway. It appears there's Graffiti on the walls beside him.

YOUNG MAN
Look, all you have to say is, "Now you listen here... my son, the future of your business, is in desperate need of a break. And he'd really appreciate it if you'd stop being a pussy and just let him have his chance..."

INT. HOUSE, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The Dad chuckles to himself. He thinks for a minute.

DAD
You know it's not my decision right...Look, if it means that much to you, maybe you should go and see him yourself - Learn some independence.

EXT. QUIET STREET ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

The alley is starting to look dodgier and dodgier the further he ventures...

YOUNG MAN
Alright, fair enough. How about I just head there now if it's that easy?

Pause.

DAD
Right now?

YOUNG MAN
Right now.

There's a few moments of silence.

DAD
Er I don't know if that's a good idea.

YOUNG MAN

Aww. You worried I'm gonna make you look bad?

DAD

No, I'm worried you'll miss you dinner.

The Dad seems to be acting rather frantically as he prematurely tries to get dinner ready.

YOUNG MAN

Alright, whatever.

DAD

So hurry back.

The young man smirks and ends the call.

INT. HOUSE, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The Dad shakes his head and continues making dinner. Despite the conversation, the Dad still looks optimistic.

EXT. QUIET STREET ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

The young man walks with a smile on his face and a certain pride in his step.

That 'grin' of his is now looking most certainly like a 'smile'.

Then, a HOODIE steps out in front of him from a walkway, standing alert and clearly having waited to pounce on him.

The young man freezes solid. Then another HOODIE steps out from another walkway behind him, looking just as stern. Both men look vicious as hell and stare at him like he's done something wrong... whatever that may be!

The young turns to face his stalker, then back around to the other man that's stood right up in his face.

Then, very suddenly, TWO MORE HOODIES - all seemingly members of some kind of street gang - run out from hiding and charge at him!

SMACK! The two men pound him one, knocking a hardened clenched fist right into his cheek!

The young man screams out in pain as the other two men take turns in dealing heavy blows to his upper and lower torso.

Again and again they pound hard on him, beating him further into the ground like he were being pressed into mud.

After an agonisingly long yet brief time, the gang decide to cowardly run off.

The young man lays motionless on the ground.

The alley goes dead silent. All that is left behind is the slow drifting of crisp snowflakes.

They fall onto the boys face and onto the bloodied ground with a certain grace and elegance.

TRANSITION TO:

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - SOMETIME LATER

The scene eclipses into another kind of silence... the sound of death.

The young man lies in a hospital bed with his dad standing beside him. The only sound is that of a heart rate monitor, which beeps only momentarily.

TRANSITION TO:

EXT. GRAVEYARD - MORE TIME LATER

From the fallout of the boy's assault, to the brutal aftermath to now, it seems an unrecognisable amount of time has passed.

The dad now stands over his son's tombstone.

A gentle wind blows over the graveyard as low-hanging storm clouds glide through the skies above.

The Dad - a man of thirty eight years of age, with a half-shaven beard and matted hair - gazes into the past that lays buried within the ground.

From a distance, the dad stares rather mellowly at his son's grave and we fade out into oblivion...

TITLE

CUT IN:

EXT. NUCLEAR TESTING SITE - SOMETIME

We fade into a vast plain of empty space - a site that looks like it belongs in the Nevada Desert, with the exception of some additional terrain that suggests otherwise...

Because there's also a neighbouring town just beyond it - just behind a collection of hills to the west.

For several moments, only the sound of breeze sweeps across the landscape.

Then: BLINDING LIGHT engulfs our view entirely.

And from that, a giant mushroom cloud raises its toxic head into the sky.

Thick, choking fumes of smoke continue to grow at a height that seems incalculable from this distance.

A shockwave of energy then begins to fan out in all directions towards both us and towards the doomed town that lies beyond.

No matter the immediate outcome, the radioactive fallout that follows is sure to spell trouble for all parties...

TRANSITION TO:

INT. KITCHEN - SOMETIME LATER

The mushroom cloud starts to dissolve into our protagonist's face as he stares rather somberly towards the floor.

He's standing next to his kitchen counter, above a cutting board of giant mushrooms.

With a knife, he cuts right down the middle of one.

Our protagonist - JAMES - stands in silence, preparing what looks like another meal, albeit a meal only for himself.

Then, he turns away and walks out of the kitchen.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

James walks passed his TV, wading his way over to his mobile phone on the dining table next to the far window.

The TV appears to be broadcasting the news... And the NEWS ANCHOR seems to be broadcasting news that seems to suggest impending disaster!

NEWS ANCHOR

After nearly a decade of unrest amongst the governments of the United States and North Korea, it seems likely that, after all that's been protested against Kim Jong-un, that a final ultimatum will be reached by the end of next week.

James walks with his phone in hand, browsing through a playlist of songs on Spotify.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

James selects a song of his choice and returns to his cook station, leaving the phone on the counter.

Cue 'Singin' in the Rain' by Mint Royale...

CUE MONTAGE SEQUENCE CONSISTING OF CLIPS CUT TOGETHER IN RAPID SUCCESSION.

James throws a load of chopped mushrooms into a frying pan.

Flames erupt from the pan.

We see James humming along to the song ever so slightly.

James opens his fridge. We see a limited supply of food - in fact, all the food remaining is going to be used for this particular meal. He grabs every single item: butter, lettuce and salmon.

He pulls out two slices of bread from a loaf bag and places them onto a cutting board.

James finely cuts the butter from an extremely close distance, as if cutting for a delicate Flora commercial.

He spreads the butter, finely slices the lettuce and throws them on too.

He grabs the frying pan and sizzles the mushrooms.

He finely pours the mushrooms, places on the salmon and tops with the upper layer of bread, finally slicing the freshly made sandwich into triangles.

He drops the cut sandwich onto a plate.

He finally taps on the stop button and the song ends.

END OF MONTAGE. THE MUSIC CUTS OUT...

INT. HOUSE, DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

James crashes onto sofa in front of the TV.

He takes a large bite while admiring the news anchors broadcast.

He shakes his head in dismay as he watches with an obvious look of contempt.

NEWS ANCHOR

Whatever the outcome, it now seems that, even after what feels like a lifetime of dispute, war against this nation has been favoured over any form of peaceful negotiation.

James chuckles - It's obvious what the outcome will be.

KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK.

James freezes. He slows his chewing and looks rather inquisitive. There's someone at the door - Who could that be??

He gets up, licking his fingers. By the looks of his expression, he doesn't like his meals interrupted.

EXT. THE FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

The back of a short male is seen standing in front of the entrance. James opens the door and immediately recognises the caller...

A boy named ERIC - fourteen, wearing sporty attire and a large grin - stands there with glee. James reacts with smug satisfaction - is this a regular trouble maker or a friend?

JAMES

Can I help you?

ERIC

That depends.

James stares at him for a few moments. Eric doesn't follow up on the response. James then gestures for him to speak.

JAMES

Depends on what?

ERIC

Well I don't know. Just thought you'd have a plan for going out.

JAMES

What do you mean a plan? I told you, I'm not babysitting anymore, you're fourteen.

ERIC

Parents are out. What am I supposed to do?

JAMES

I don't care. Entertain yourself.

Eric rolls his eyes to the side and grins, cheekily. James recognises the implication and cuts in...

JAMES

Actually no, don't do that... So err, what was I saying?

ERIC

You weren't.

JAMES

Oh yeah, please go away.

James nearly closes the door in Eric's face but Eric calls out.

ERIC

There's a war coming you know.

James freezes for a moment, then opens up the door. That statement has definitely struck a cord.

JAMES

Who told you that?

ERIC

Er everyone. It's on the news as well. This is big.

JAMES

Yeah, well, I'm inclined not to listen to what broadcasters tell me.

Pause.

ERIC

And what about me?

That response causes James to pause as well...

TO BE CONTINUED...