

BAD BLOOD

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. ELEVATED TRAIN STATION - DAY

A LIVERY CAB sits under the "L", waiting as passengers exit the stairwell. A suspicious-looking, GRUNGY MAN comes down the steps, sees the cab and gets in.

INT. CAB - DAY - CONTINUOUS

As the grungy man enters, the driver, a Latino man named MANUEL starts the car, thinking nothing of it until the man discreetly puts a gun to his head. Manuel sighs.

MANUEL (V.O.)

(chuckling)

In broad-fucking-daylight. If I were on the outside looking in, I might have laughed.

The man COCKS the hammer.

MANUEL (V.O.)

(continuing; serious)

If only.

Manuel looks at the man in the rearview mirror.

MANUEL

Well, I'll tell you, I do enjoy being robbed, but it's nine o'clock in the morning and you're my first passenger so there is no money. Why don't you try back in a couple of hours?

The man stares at Manuel, surprised by his sarcasm in his predicament.

MANUEL (V.O.)

I've been robbed more than you think. It's amazing what you can get used to. The good news is, he didn't get any money...

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY - LATER

JUAN, the store owner, is reading the paper at the counter.

MANUEL (V.O.)

...the bad news is, he gave me something for my sense of humor...

Manuel ENTERS, sporting a small CUT across his temple.

MANUEL (V.O.)
(continuing)
...a dose of reality.

Manuel holds a handkerchief to his head, irritably. Juan sees him.

JUAN
~Anda la mierda~. Again?! It's a little early for this, Manuel, no?

MANUEL
Box of band-aids?

Juan gives Manuel a bandaid.

JUAN
On me, Papa.

MANUEL
~Gracias~.

Manuel takes it.

MANUEL
(continuing)
Back to work.

JUAN
Alright. Break a leg.
(pauses)
I mean...you know what I mean.
(pauses)
Just be careful.

EXT. AIRPORT - DAY

Manuel's cab cruises along slowly as arriving passengers exit with their luggage. He pulls over at the curb.

INT. MANUEL'S CAB - DAY

Manuel now wears a band-aid across his cut. He checks it in the rearview mirror.

MANUEL (V.O.)
At the time, obviously, I would rather have dealt with the traffic at the airport than the people coming out of the train station.

A LATINO MAN and WOMAN, ELIAS and DAISY come out of the exit behind Manuel. The man carries a couple of small duffle bags. They see Manuel's cab and approach it.

MANUEL (V.O.)

(continuing)

But if I'd known what was about to happen, I would really have preferred being robbed again, instead.

Elias and Daisy enter the cab. Manuel looks up into the rearview and reacts in shock.

ELIAS

(adjusting his bags)

Hi. Do you know where...

Elias fishes in his pockets and pulls out a piece of paper.

MANUEL

(cold)

Get out.

ELIAS

What?

DAISY

Excuse me?

Recognition suddenly registers on his passenger's faces as they all stare at each other now, extremely uncomfortable.

MANUEL

Get out...of my fucking cab...now.

ELIAS

Manuel, listen, I've-

MANUEL

(exploding)

GET OUT!!!

Daisy calmly nudges Elias, quietly. Elias reluctantly complies as he places the paper back in his pocket. He and Daisy grab their bags and exit the cab.

EXT. MANUEL'S CAB - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The second they close the doors, Manuel PEELS OUT and away from them.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY - LATER

Manuel opens his door, steps in and SLAMS it shut. He throws his keys and PUNCHES the wall.

After a few moments, the phone rings. He looks at it for a moment then finally picks it up.

MANUEL

What?!

MALE VOICE

(on phone)

Manuel? Where'd you go? You've been gone for hours.

MANUEL

I'm taking the rest of the day off, Eddie.

MALE VOICE

(on phone)

Um...alright, well...I dunno if Louie's gonna like-

Manuel SLAMS the phone down. After a quiet moment, it rings again so he RIPS it out of the wall and throws it.

INT. APARTMENT - EVENING - LATER

Manuel sits on the couch in silence, drinking a beer. He keeps glancing over at a bookshelf until finally he reluctantly goes over to it.

He shoves some books aside, pulls a thick, MANILLA ENVELOPE and goes back to the couch as he opens it.

Manuel pulls a bunch of PHOTOGRAPHS from inside and begins to sift through them, first angrily, then thoughtfully.

Suddenly, there's a knock at the door and he puts the photos down, grabs a CHINESE FOOD MENU and looks at it as he digs into his pockets, counting out some money.

MANUEL

One sec!

He opens the door and Elias stands there alone.

ELIAS

Please, Manuel.

A look between them and Manuel goes to close the door. Elias stops him.

ELIAS

(continuing)

Manuel, for Mom's sake. She would have brought us together to speak. You know that.

MANUEL

Don't you fucking dare drag Mom into this. Don't try to use her like that.

ELIAS

I'm not. I'm just-

MANUEL

She didn't know what you did.

ELIAS

She would have understood.

MANUEL

Bullshit. She would have frowned on you and that bitch.

ELIAS

Don't say that about her. This is about you and m-

MANUEL

I'm either gonna beat the shit out of you or call the cops. Either way, you're not coming in. You wanted to speak? We spoke.

Elias notices the photos on the coffee table. There's a picture of Manuel, Elias and Daisy at a gathering, having a good time.

Elias almost smiles.

ELIAS

You still have them.

(pauses)

C'mon, Manuel. There must be something there. At least a part of you must not want things this way.

MANUEL

Forget about it. That part of me died when you stole Daisy from me.

ELIAS

I didn't st-

MANUEL

Save it.

ELIAS

I don't believe this. I'm still your broth-

MANUEL

Don't. You're not my brother. You
can't be my brother. Brothers
don't do what you did.

Manuel slams the door.

INT. LIVERY DISPATCH OFFICE - NIGHT - LATER

Manuel enters and stands at the booth. EDDIE sees him and
looks confused.

EDDIE

What're you doing here?

MANUEL

I'm working.

EDDIE

You said you were taking the rest
of the d-

MANUEL

I changed my mind. Punch me in.

EDDIE

(confused)
But...your shift is over, man.

MANUEL

Then I'm putting in some extra
time, Eddie. Give me a card and
shut the fuck up already.

EDDIE

(taken aback)
Okay, put the gun down. I
surrender.

He passes Manuel a card.

The door opens and Elias walks in.

ELIAS

I'm not going anywhere until you
give me a chance to speak.

Eddie stands back and watches, curious.

MANUEL

You've got some fucking nerve, you
know that?!
(more)

MANUEL (cont'd)

We don't talk for seven years and you're fine with that, but you conveniently run into me at the airport and suddenly, you want to play the good guy extending the olive branch!!

ELIAS

That's not-

MANUEL

Go fuck yourself, Elias! You never would've given a shit if you didn't just happen to see me!

ELIAS

I don't want to pick a fight with you about every little thing. There are more important things we need to settle.

MANUEL

(mock seriousness)

Oh, really? Like what?

ELIAS

Like me explaining what happened.

MANUEL

I know what the fuck happened! And I'm sure as hell not gonna give you closure about anything! I'm not giving you that satisfaction! Anything else?!

ELIAS

Yes.

MANUEL

What?

ELIAS

Forgive me.

MANUEL

What?

ELIAS

(desperate)

I..I want you to forgive me.

(pauses)

Daisy and I tried for two years to forget about each other, Manuel.

(more)

ELIAS (cont'd)

When we felt that initial spark, it scared us. It scared us because we'd never felt anything like it before and it scared us because she was with you. But mostly it scared us because...because you loved her so much. We didn't want to do that to you.

MANUEL

You were messing with her for two years? While she and I we were going out??

ELIAS

No...we denied it for two years.

MANUEL

(sarcastic)

Well, that's very big of you.

ELIAS

Just...I need you to understand this. I mean really understand it. You have to believe, if we could have done anything, we would have.

MANUEL

You could have!!! You could have gone on with your life and left her alone!!!

ELIAS

No. I couldn't. She couldn't. Not something like this. Not something this big, Manuel. It was the kind of love that you live for. That you die for.

MANUEL

Well, I guess that makes it alright, then.

ELIAS

I'm not trying to justify it. I just want you to understand. The feelings. The power of it. It's been seven years. Seven years and we still feel like we did when we first looked at each oth-

Manuel PUNCHES Elias in the face and he staggers back, wiping his mouth.

ELIAS

(continuing)

Seven years, Manuel. How can you still be so angry?

(quietly; genuinely)

It must be killing you.

MANUEL

What do you care? You have what you want.

ELIAS

I don't have what I want. I don't have your forgiveness. I don't have your love.

MANUEL

(intently)

That's right! That's the only way I can make you pay. It's the only way I can have any revenge. You want Daisy? You got her. But you lost me.

ELIAS

(shakily)

No. No, Manuel, just think about what I said. Just think about it. Please.

Manuel walks past him.

MANUEL

Yeah, I'll think about it. I'll think about it while you rot in hell.

Manuel leaves and Elias stands there at a loss. He looks around and then at Eddie, who suddenly looks away and tries to find something to do.

EXT. ELEVATED TRAIN STATION - NIGHT - LATER

Manuel's cab cruises down the empty street.

INT. MANUEL'S CAB - NIGHT - SAME TIME

Manuel drives, his expression grim and unwavering. He glances up into his rearview mirror and sees a RENTAL CAR following close by. Too close. He peers closer and he sees Elias at the wheel.

Manuel pounds the steering wheel in aggravation.

MANUEL

~Carajo!~ This fuckin' guy!!

EXT. STREET - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Manuel's cab swerves, pulls over and screeches to a halt. Manuel gets out as Elias's car pulls up behind him.

Elias exits the car and faces Manuel who practically charges him.

MANUEL

What's wrong with you?! It's not gonna happen!!! You can follow me all you want!!!

ELIAS

I have to try.

MANUEL

You tried! And you failed! Go home! Go home, kiss your wife, play with your kids and feed your dog! Just leave me the hell alo-

VOICE (O.S.)

Whoa, whoa, now, what's all this about?!

Manuel and Elias turn and the GRUNGY MAN that robbed Manuel in the opening saunters over, making sure no one else is around.

GRUNGY MAN

Actually, it's none of my business. I'll just take your money. It's well past midnight this time, Mister Cabbie. I came back just like you said.

Manuel and Elias move but the robber touches the handle of a gun in his pocket.

GRUNGY MAN

(continuing)

Oh, c'mon now.

They freeze. The robber pulls the gun out and holds it at his side.

GRUNGY MAN

(continuing; to
Manuel)

No smartmouth this time, wiseass?

(gesturing to money)

Let's go. Let's have it.

Manuel is trying to suppress a swelling rage but as he reaches into his pocket, he suddenly LEAPS at the grungy man and they struggle.

ELIAS

No!

Elias grabs the robber's gunhand and Manuel headbutts him. The gun GOES OFF and the robber and Elias fall to the ground.

It happens so fast that Manuel seems confused as he goes to Elias and shakes him.

MANUEL

Elias! Elias, what's wrong? Are you hurt?

Manuel looks and sees a neat hole in Elias's coat. He pulls it open and there's blood everywhere.

MANUEL

(continuing)

Oh no.

Manuel goes into his own jacket pocket and takes out a cell phone, dialing quickly.

He pulls Elias close to him and pushes down hard on the wound as he holds the phone to his ear.

MANUEL

(continuing; into
phone)

Yes! Yes, there's been a- a- shooting...a mugging. Someone's been shot. I'm- I'm at uh, the corner on...42nd and- and Grand street- Grand avenue...the corner of 42nd and Grand Avenue. Alright. Alright.

Manuel lets the phone drop and shakes Elias, whose eyes seem to be wandering. He's muttering.

MANUEL

(continuing)

Hey! Hey!! Are you- Can you hear me?!

ELIAS

...it's...you- forgive...

MANUEL

What? I can't unders-...try to stay calm.

ELIAS

...forgive me...

MANUEL

What?

ELIAS

...can you?...can...forgive me?

MANUEL

Yeah, yeah! Stay awake. Can you hear me?

Elias smiles, weakly.

ELIAS

Yeah, I hear...you forgive me.

MANUEL

Yeah, goddamnit, I forgive you, just don't...don't fall asl...stay awake, okay?! Okay?!

Elias nods and then slumps.

Manuel just sits there, staring at Elias's sudden stillness.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT - LATER

Manuel paces up and down the corridor with blood on him. He tosses Elias's jacket on a chair.

He steals glances farther down the hallway at Daisy, sitting very still. Her eyes are tearing but she remains quiet and strong as she stares ahead into oblivion.

A DOCTOR comes out and Manuel approaches him.

DOCTOR

We'd lost him just before he arrived. I'm sorry.

(pauses)

There was too much damage. Nothing could be done.

(more)

DOCTOR (cont'd)
Even though you had so little time
left with him, Mr. Vega, I'm very
sorry that he was taken from you
that much sooner.

MANUEL
Wh-What?

DOCTOR
I just mean that...
(pauses)
You did know that your brother was
dying?

MANUEL
What?

DOCTOR
Oh, I thought you would have
known. He probably didn't want you
to w-

MANUEL
What was wrong with him?

DOCTOR
He suffered from a rare blood
disease. It was detected very
late, therefore he was expected to
have only a month or so. It's good
that he came down to be with you
even though...

Manuel looks past the doctor at Daisy, who now gives him a
knowing, dagger-like stare.

DOCTOR
(continuing)
...he hadn't been honest about his
condition. It's good that he was
here with you.

A nurse approaches the doctor and whispers something.

DOCTOR
(continuing; to
Manuel)
Excuse me.

The doctor walks away. Manuel notices Elias's jacket dangling
off the chair. He numbly picks it up and he sees a piece of
paper sticking out of the pocket.

He pulls it out and it's the paper Elias opened in the cab. Manuel opens it and there's an address on it...

...with MANUEL'S NAME AT THE TOP.

Manuel's heart seems to sink.

FLASHBACK

-- Elias and Daisy sit in the back of Manuel's cab. Elias pulls out the same piece of paper.

END FLASHBACK

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT - (PRESENT)

Manuel crumples the paper, dizzy with conflicting thoughts now. He turns and Daisy stands in front of him now.

DAISY

All he wanted was your forgiveness.

MANUEL

Why didn't he tell me?

DAISY

He didn't want your forgiveness because he was dying, Manuel. He wanted you to forgive him because you loved him.

Manuel is stunned. Daisy suddenly begins to sob as she walks away.

INT. HOUSE - FUNERAL RECEPTION - DAY

Dozens of people in black attire mill about, talking quietly, eating slowly. Some are crying, some are smiling sadly.

Manuel sits alone, staring into space, coldly.

EXT. DAISY'S HOME - DAY - LATER

Manuel walks up to the door, hesitates, then KNOCKS almost too softly to be heard. He starts to walk away and the door OPENS.

Manuel turns around and Daisy STANDS there, stoically. She stares at him with judgement.

MANUEL (V.O.)

Sometimes you can sense that words...any words, will just make everything worse.

It's apparent that Manuel doesn't know what to do. And it's painfully obvious that Daisy is not going to help him. Manuel finally nods to himself in acceptance and turns toward his car without a word.

MANUEL (V.O.)
 (continuing)
 Sometimes there just isn't
 anything to say.

EXT. BRIDGE - DAY - LATER

Manuel's cab moves among traffic across the bridge.

INT. MANUEL'S CAB - DAY - SAME TIME

Manuel drives with a stone-faced expression.

MANUEL (V.O.)
 No, I never spoke to my brother.
 No, I hadn't spoken to him for
 seven years. But I always knew he
 was there somewhere...still, you
 know...being my brother. Still
 around. And I swear it was exactly
 in that first instant after Elias
 passed out in my arms,...it wasn't
 until that first second that I
 thought I might never see him
 again, ever,...it was only then I
 could see again...that I could
 feel that love for him again. And
 then I realized I never stopped
 feeling it...that I never could.
 That's what it took.
 (pauses)
 But then...I couldn't have him
 back.

Manuel turns the wheel, abruptly.

EXT. MANUEL'S CAB - SAME TIME

Manuel's car pulls to the shoulder and stops.

INT. MANUEL'S CAB - SAME TIME

Manuel stares ahead, numbed as traffic goes by.

MANUEL (V.O.)
 "Time heals all wounds". Yes. Time
 does heal all wounds...

Suddenly, Manuel starts to sob. He GRIPS the wheel tight. He rests his head on it...and finally...

...he cries.

MANUEL (V.O.)

(continuing)

...but your heart will bear those
scars...and those scars will
remind you of that pain...forever.

The point of view slowly MOVES back and farther and farther
away until Manuel is lost in the vastness of the city.

FADE OUT: