

CRIMSON

Written by

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INT. CRIMSON MANSION - THE GREAT HALL - NIGHT

The moonlight sparkles as a single beam of light SHINES upon Crimson Mansion. WINSLOW KRAVEN (35), a gloomy and sad-looking gentleman, is sitting in front of a blank CANVAS inside his neat, and simplistic room.

WINSLOW  
It's just another painting.  
Envision it. Embody it.

Winslow is staring at his blank canvas for a couple minutes. He abruptly stands up and starts groaning.

WINSLOW (CONT'D)  
This sense of dread and misery  
plagues my mind. Is this painting  
my demise?

Winslow starts pacing back and forth and grinds his teeth in a very aggressive manner. He stares at the dozens of pale and mundane PAINTINGS hanging on the walls with a sad and empty expression.

He pulls out a LETTER from city hall inside his pocket.

WINSLOW (V.O.)

Winslow Kraven, you are hereby invited to create a unique piece to celebrate the anniversary of your service as the City's Artist

WINSLOW  
My mind. It's blank. My work, my  
career, it's all on the line.

Winslow sits hunched over in his chair and taps his feet up and down nervously. A DROPLET of water suddenly strikes Winslow's face. He looks up and sees a crack on the ceiling.

WINSLOW (CONT'D)  
Good grief. DIANA! Please come here  
for a second.

DIANA (20), a young and nervous looking maid, dashes through the door. She waits to hear what Winslow has to say.

WINSLOW (CONT'D)  
Diana, do you know what's wrong  
with the ceiling? It's hard for me  
to focus with this infuriating  
dripping noise.

Diana gazes upwards to see the leaking ceiling and looks back at Winslow with a frightened expression.

DIANA

I'm so very sorry for allowing this issue to disturb your work Master Winslow. I reached out to the plumber but it should take him at least half a week to get here and resolve the issue.

WINSLOW

Get out.

Diana runs out of the room.

WINSLOW (CONT'D)

This painting. The most important piece of work in my life. All I see is a blank canvas. How preposterous is that?

Winslow chuckles in disbelief as he struggles to find an idea. But he perseveres and starts to dabble some colors onto his canvas. After a couple of strokes, he angrily scraps the work and redoes it. The cycle repeats itself five times.

The water droplets continue to fall on the hardwood floor.

Winslow shoves a stack of PAPER and ART SUPPLIES off his desk out of frustration.

WINSLOW (V.O.)

Colours. Paint. Pastels. Nothing is working. Red, green, blue? What warrants and defines uniqueness?

Winslow eyes wanders the room but all he sees are wilting plants, rustic books, and repetitive dusty paintings of trees and forests confined in a room colored with a shade of drab beige.

Everywhere he looks, all he sees are pale shades in every inch of the room. He begins to tap his foot subconsciously.

WINSLOW

Everything is so dry. I feel so thirsty. I just need a droplet of inspiration.

Winslow taps his foot at an even faster pace. He looks around the room again but this time squinting to inspect it closer.

He spots a HAND MIRROR on top of his CABINET. Winslow's eyes open wider as he grabs the mirror and dashes back to his canvas.

WINSLOW (CONT'D)

The answer was me all along!

Winslow grabbed his PAINTBRUSH to replicate his face by using the mirror. As he tries to paint the colors on, every stroke causes him to frown more.

Winslow steps back to view his piece but all he could see is a canvas filled with boring, light, and generic colors. His feet is tapping at a rapid pace.

The water droplets start DRIPPING louder

WINSLOW (CONT'D)

I can't. I can't. I don't know what to do. I can't even look at this garbage. It's horrendous. I'm horrendous.

Winslow turns away from his canvas. He looks around the room but he's surrounded with unoriginal paintings. Everything about the paintings were generic. The colors, the style, and the subject were the same.

Winslow finally realizes that everything he has made up until now is the same simple art.

He stands up with tears running down his face. He SHATTERS the mirror, kicks down the canvas, and starts to tear down all the paintings on the wall. He rips each and every one of them to shreds.

WINSLOW (CONT'D)

I've failed as an artist. As a man.  
It's over for me.

The water continues to DRIP to the point where it becomes unbearable to listen to.

Winslow starts SMASHING his head against the wall.

WINSLOW (CONT'D)

SHUT UP. SHUT UP. SHUT UP. SHUT UP.  
Please. It's so loud! I can't take it anymore. I just need. Silence.  
GO AWAY!

Blood SPURTS from Winslow's forehead as he limps and drops to his knees. The noise ceases.

Winslow freezes on his knees for a second. He looks down at his knees and sees a puddle of blood. Suddenly a curious smile spreads across his face. He dips his finger in the puddle and tastes the blood. His eyes open wide.

WINSLOW (CONT'D)

That's it. It was in front of me  
all along.

Winslow grabs his paintbrush and dips it in his blood as he draws one swift stroke on the canvas.

The CLOCK on the wall ticks faster and faster as time goes by.

Diana walks into the hall to see a silent Winslow stand before a canvas. This canvas was filled with bright colors and exuberant details. What stood out the most is a very mesmerizing and unique shade splattered on the canvas.

DIANA

It looks fantastic. I'm sure the  
people will love this. Also sir,  
are you alright? You're looking  
quite exasperated.

Winslow turns around to face Diana with a weak smile. His eyes are droopy, he's slouched, and his face is tense.

WINSLOW

'Tis the life of an artist, my dear  
Diana.

Diana stands back and stares at the canvas as she analyses it.

DIANA

I can't put my finger on it but the  
painting looks really familiar, yet  
so different.

WINSLOW

Inspiration can arise in the most  
unexpected of moments.

Winslow looks at his fingers that are stained with red blots. The ground is scattered with BROKEN WOOD and TORN COTTON along with subtle stains of blood.

WINSLOW (CONT'D)

Art requires the bravery to take a  
risk and make a sacrifice.

INT. ART GALLERY - MAIN EXHIBIT - MORNING

A crowd of fifteen gathers around the portrait of Winslow. Their eyes are locked onto his stern and hardened expression.

His face showed a man who was proud, but also has a strong sense of sadness and rage which reflected in his sharp eye. His expression was sad yet happy, angry yet joyful, chaotic yet calm.

DIANA (V.O.)

Master Winslow, I must ask though.  
What exactly makes this piece so  
unique?

The people depart as they look awed, confused, and nervous. They could not shrug off the feelings they had when they looked at the painting.

WINSLOW (V.O.)

This particular painting was  
crafted with a special kind of  
paint. At night, is when you can  
truly take in its hidden beauty.

INT. ART GALLERY - MAIN EXHIBIT - NIGHT

As a ray of moonlight SHINES on the crimson strokes of Winslow's face in the painting, a strange shade of red EMITS from his eyes and a smile SPREADS across his face.

WINSLOW (V.O.)

Red is such an expressive color.  
Every shade tells a different  
story.

DIANA (V.O.)

What story does your shade tell?

INT. CRIMSON MANSION - THE GREAT HALL - NIGHT

Winslow sits at his DESK and writes in his JOURNAL.

WINSLOW (V.O.)

Art is essentially a window into  
the soul of the person. It tells us  
who we are as artists, as men and  
women, but mostly who we are as  
humans.

END.