

The Strange Side of the Moon

written by

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EXT. SKY-NIGHT

A full moon shines.

INT. ROMANS' ROOM- NIGHT

ROMAN, 15, dressed too old for his age, stares lustfully out the window, spying on the girl next door.

GRANDPA O.S.

(yelling)

Is the birthday boy gonna spend all night in his room?

GRANDMA O.S.

(also yelling)

I'm falling asleep!

INT. DINING ROOM- NIGHT

GRANDMA and GRANDPA, married for far too long, and Roman, are all gathered around the kitchen table, wearing party hats. Wrapping paper is scattered across the table. Roman stares forward, uninterested.

GRANDMA

Well, presents before dinner is a bit unconventional but considering how depressing this birthday party is-

Grandpa takes a big swish of scotch.

GRANDPA

Hey, take it easy on the kid.

GRANDMA

(to Roman)

Sorry sweetie.

ROMAN

(shrugging)

She's not wrong.

GRANDPA

How was school? Did you do anything?

ROMAN

No, but I watched.

GRANDPA

Do you like the wool sweater we got you?

ROMAN

(itching himself)

Yes.

GRANDPA

You got a rash or something? Yer itching yourself like you stepped in one of them anthills outside.

Grandpa thinks for a moment.

GRANDPA (CONT'D)

Well what if I tell you that there's still one more gift waiting for you?

ROMAN

(solemn)

Oh boy.

The party of three get up and head outside.

EXT. YARD- NIGHT

The three of them step into the yard. A high quality telescope shines in the moonlight. This sparks something inside Roman. He rushes over and starts examining it.

ROMAN

Thanks, this is fantastic.

GRANDPA

Yeah we thought you'd like it 'cuz you're always lookin' out the window...

ROMAN

(nervous)

Wha-

GRANDPA

(excitedly)

At the moon!

ROMAN

Yeah...the moon...that's what I was looking at. Thanks, guys.

GRANDPA

Here, let's give him some alone
time with it.

Grandma and grandpa head back into the house, Roman plays with the telescope. He turns it towards the neighbor's house. He looks through it. Close on the neighbor's window. It is shut.

ROMAN

Dang!

He shrugs and turns the telescope to the sky, looking through it again. Close on the moon. Life forms with large heads and elbowed antennae bustle about. Roman is frozen in awe.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

No way! I found aliens! I'm not a
nobody anymore.

Roman darts over to the side of the house and shouts up to his grandma and grandpa's window.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Yo! Guys!

Grandpa flings open the window.

GRANDPA

(drunk)

Whaddup? Did ya see Mars?

ROMAN

You're not gonna believe this but
there are aliens! Aliens on the
moon!

GRANDPA

(Oblivious)

Ah, the moon's great son.

Roman pauses for a second, shocked.

ROMAN

Uh, they're gonna invade Earth?

GRANDPA

How much the telescope is worth? I
ain't gonna tell you that.

ROMAN

(Frustrated)

Then they're gonna eat our faces
off.

GRANDPA
Your face is soft?

ROMAN
(Exhausted)
Okay, bye grandpa.

Grandpa closes the window. Roman scratches his head and sighs. He gets an idea. Roman takes out his phone and snaps a picture of the view of the moon through the telescope.

ROMAN (CONT'D)
Yes! Oh dang I can't show this to grandma and grandpa, they'll have simultaneous heart attacks.

Close on the face of an FBI agent, sitting in the bushes as he spies on Roman through a pair of binoculars.

Roman itches his hand. Then he gets another idea.

EXT. NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE-NIGHT

Roman walks up to the steps and knocks on the door. He is awkward. MAURIE, pretty girl, Roman's age, opens the door, disturbed.

ROMAN
Hey, do want to come over to my house for dinner?

MAURIE
(Blankly)
No.

ROMAN
I want to show you something cool.

MAURIE
I'm good.

ROMAN
It's my birthday.

Maurie sighs.

INT. DINING ROOM-NIGHT

The party of four sit around the table. They eat in silence. There is an uncomfortable atmosphere. Roman taps his foot anxiously.

GRANDMA
(breaking the silence)
Yeah, ever since his mom left he's
been a little strange.

GRANDPA
(to Maurie)
Honey, what do you like to do to
occupy yourself?

MAURIE
I like painting.

ROMAN
(still tapping)
Oh, haha that's so cool, wanna go
to the backyard with me?

GRANDMA
Don't you want to get to know her
better first?

ROMAN
(smiling in pain)
C'mon, let's go.

EXT. YARD-NIGHT

ROMAN
I need to show you something.

MAURIE
What?

ROMAN
There are freaking aliens on the
moon.

Roman points the telescope. Maurie slowly moves toward it.
She looks through it.

MAURIE
Wow.

ROMAN
Right?

MAURIE
There's nothing there.

ROMAN
(surprised)
What?

Roman looks through the telescope. Close on the moon. There is nothing there.

ROMAN (CONT'D)
I don't get it.

MAURIE
I do. You just wanted a reason to invite me over so you could-

ROMAN
Wait, shut up. Look at this picture.

Roman takes out his phone and shows Maurie the picture of the aliens.

MAURIE
Hmm. This picture does look pretty real.

ROMAN
It's impressive, isn't it?

MAURIE
Yeah, it's rad. I wanna paint it.

ROMAN
Yeah sure, I'll send it to you.

MAURIE
Don't you need my number?

ROMAN
That's okay, I already have it.

MAURIE
(uncomfortable)
Um, alright then. Bye.

Maurie leaves. Roman smiles, thinking of Maurie. He then turns to his telescope, dumbfounded.

Montage - Various-

EXT. YARD-NIGHT

Roman looks into the telescope, taking pictures and writing notes. Still no aliens.

The FBI Agent spies on Roman from a nearby tree.

INT. ROMAN'S ROOM-COMPUTER DESK-DAY

Roman types "aliens on the moon" into the search bar.

EXT. YARD-NIGHT

Roman stands in the yard next to a board covered in sticky notes and strings connected to pins. Papers are everywhere. He is a madman.

EXT. MOON SHINING IN SKY. NIGHT.

INT. ROMAN'S ROOM. NIGHT.

Roman lies in bed, covered in sweat and unable to sleep. The moonlight shines through the window. He takes out his phone and begins to scroll through a large collection of pictures of Maurie saved on his phone.

EXT. YARD. NIGHT.

The FBI Agent stands in Roman's yard. He turns to look at an anthill on the ground.

END OF MONTAGE

EXT. ROMAN'S HOUSE. DAY.

Maurie hops up to the door. She knocks. Roman answers the door. He hasn't been taking care of himself. He is gross.

MAURIE

Uh, hey. I noticed you haven't been in school.

ROMAN

(proudly)

Working. My research is going very well.

MAURIE

(unconvinced)

And your grandma and grandpa are cool with this?

ROMAN

Eh, they haven't really noticed...does anyone miss me at school?

MAURIE

Anyway, I just wanted to say that I'm with you on this. I like it when people have...passions.

ROMAN

Thanks. So, did you finish that painting yet?

MAURIE

Um, I actually haven't gotten around to it.

ROMAN

Well, I'd love to see it when you're done.

MAURIE

Yeah. I'll show you.

INT. MAURIE'S ROOM-NIGHT

Maurie sits on her bed with her laptop. On her wall are many paintings of natural scenery that display great talent. She looks out the window. Roman is in his yard with the telescope directed towards her.

MAURIE

Ugh, again? Well, good thing I finally finished editing this.

She posts Roman's alien picture online. She smirks.

INT. LIVING ROOM- DAY

Roman, grandma, and grandpa sit on the couch watching T.V. together.

NEWS REPORTER (ON TV)

An image posted online has amassed attention worldwide, becoming viral after only being uploaded just last night.

(MORE)

NEWS REPORTER (ON TV) (CONT'D)

This photograph taken of the moon through a telescope appears to show the existence of alien life on the moon. The validity of the photo has sparked great debate among viewers...

Roman's jaw drops. Grandpa changes the channel.

GRANDPA

Ahh, bullshit.

Grandma shimmies off the couch.

GRANDMA

I'm gonna go get some leftover cake.

Roman taps his foot anxiously. He clenches his fists.

GRANDMA O.S.

Ahhh!

GRANDPA

What's wrong babe?

GRANDMA O.S.

There are weirdos in our yard!

Roman and grandpa run into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN-CONT.

They look out the window. There are TWO YOUNG BOYS in the yard.

Grandma squeezes Roman's shoulders.

GRANDMA

Roman, they're your age, you go talk to them.

Roman crosses his arms and heads outside.

EXT. YARD-DAY

ROMAN

Hey, what are you doing on our property!?

KID 1
We wanna see your telescope.

ROMAN
It's daylight you idiots.

KID 2
Okay, okay, we know the picture's fake.

ROMAN
What? It's not fake...

They laugh at him.

ROMAN (CONT'D)
So Maurie sent you here, huh?

KID 2
Yeah, she said that you're freaking crazy but you got a nice shot. Of something. But not aliens. It just looks sick.

The two kids laugh and put their fingers over their heads to resemble antennae.

Roman storms off. Grandpa peeks his head out of the window.

GRANDPA
Hey, you kids can look at that telescope...if ya pay! Five bucks each! Heh!

EXT. NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE. DAY.

Roman pounds on the door. Maurie opens it.

MAURIE
What's up?

ROMAN
Why did you post that picture online? You said that you just wanted to paint it.

MAURIE
This just made more sense. And didn't you want to share your discovery with the world anyway?

ROMAN

I needed more evidence! And don't
you patronize me. I know you think
it's fake.

Maurie laughs.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Hey!

Roman shakes his head.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

You're probably getting money from
this too, aren't you?

MAURIE

Yep. Your picture is pretty
popular.

ROMAN

You're a..fuck!

They both gasp.

MAURIE

Well, you're a stalker! I was so
happy when you started obsessing
over this "alien" thing because you
finally had something else to look
at!

Maurie slams the door.

Roman slowly recedes back into his yard, hurt. The sun is
going down. He turns to see a BLACK CAR in the driveway. The
FBI Agent is standing at the door facing grandma.

GRANDMA

Yeah, you can come in, you're kinda
cute!

FBI AGENT

Thank you ma'am.

ROMAN

Grandma!

FBI AGENT

Roman! Just the man I wanted to
talk to.

The agent approaches Roman. He places a hand on Roman's
shoulder.

FBI AGENT (CONT'D)

Would you mind if I check out your telescope? It's almost nightfall.

ROMAN

How did you know that I took the picture?

FBI AGENT

I've been watching you for a while, Roman.

ROMAN

You've been spying on me? That's kinda creepy.

EXT. YARD-NIGHT

The two stand in the yard next to the telescope.

ROMAN

(to himself)

I didn't want to show it to the world, I just wanted to show it to her.

The FBI agent looks through the telescope.

FBI AGENT

Oh my god!

He backs away from it. Roman runs over and looks through it. Close on the moon. The aliens are back, and there are a lot more of them than before.

ROMAN

Yes! I knew it!

FBI AGENT

God, kid, you got an infestation on your hands.

ROMAN

What?

FBI AGENT

This telescope is infested with ants.

He slaps an ant crawling on his hand.

FBI AGENT (CONT'D)
Shouldn't you be using this to look
at girls anyway?

The FBI Agent walks back to his car. Roman, distraught,
starts breaking the telescope.

GRANDMA
(yelling)
Hey, that shit was expensive!

The FBI Agent stands at his car as he pulls his phone out of
his pocket.

FBI AGENT
(on phone)
Yeah, the ant stunt worked
perfectly.