

ANIMAL KINGDOM

Written by

Maxime Birebent

Address  
Phone Number

**FADE IN**

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

Meet Terry, 35, young entrepreneur who started his own tech company, getting ready for work in the morning, staring at himself in the mirror

TERRY

You are rich, you are successful,  
and women want you. You are a god.

He repeats this on a loop, as he shaves his beard. When he's done shaving, he continues to stare at himself in the mirror, starts screaming (in an intimidating, power move way), stops abruptly, washes off the shaving cream, smiles, then leaves the bathroom.

Terry makes his way downstairs, where his wife of three years, Kerry, a bubbly 24 year old, is making him breakfast and blasting a popular song, not noticing Terry entering.

TERRY (CONT'D)

Baby! Baby!

Kerry still singing out loud, making eggs.

TERRY (CONT'D)

(Louder) BABY!

Kerry finally hears him and turns around.

KERRY

Well good morning there sleepy  
head! I made a breakfast for  
champions, for MY champion

Kerry giggles, she was proud of that one.

TERRY

Ah, you know I love you

Kerry giggles again, and leans in for a kiss. They kiss passionately, and things start getting heated before Terry interrupts

TERRY (CONT'D)

Not right baby, your champion has  
to go to work

Terry slaps her butt suggestively, takes one bite of toast, and brings his green juice to his car. Kerry follows him to the car, and they engage in another passionate kiss before he drives off.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Meet Patrick, 37, Terry's business partner and former high school classmate. He was on the football team, and married his high school sweetheart, Claudia, 35.

CLAUDIA

I need you to pick up dinner for tonight. The maid is sick and Julian's teacher wants to have a meeting with me. Apparently our son's behavior is getting worse, and I know he doesn't get it from me

PATRICK

Right, I forgot, everything is always my fault around here

CLAUDIA

You don't have to use that tone with me. I'm just saying, you encourage him to torment weaker kids, and you don't say anything when he picks on his sisters. And now, my son is an asshole

PATRICK

If kids at school can't handle a little roughing up, then they are never going to make it far in life. Predator eats prey. We're all animals honey, that's how the world works

Claudia rolls her eyes.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

Besides, an alpha dog needs to assert his dominance to make himself heard. Send a message to the little guy

A car honks outside, it's Terry picking Patrick up for work.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

I gotta go, but remember, men will be men

He leans in very close to his wife's face.

PATRICK (CONT'D)  
(Smoothly) How else would we bag  
beautiful ladies?

He gives her a quick peck on the lips and starts walking out the door. She playfully rolls her eyes and smirks, clearly impressed by her husband.

CLAUDIA  
And don't forget dinner!

He exits, shutting the door behind him, walking over to Terry's car.

Claudia looks out the window and notices Terry looking at her. He winks at her and she waves at him flirtatiously.

INT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Terry and Patrick are chatting in the car.

PATRICK  
So you ready for the big pitch  
buddy?

TERRY  
Yeah it's uh... it's gonna blow  
people away

PATRICK  
You bet your ass it will! And hey,  
don't worry, I'll cover most of it.  
You'll just have to stand there  
looking pretty as you always do,  
Termite! Hahahahahahaha!!!

This makes Terry cringe as Patrick cracks himself up.

TERRY  
Right haha this joke again. Funny.

Patrick doesn't pick up on Terry's sarcasm.

PATRICK  
Hey, on a serious note though, I  
wanna thank you for all your help  
driving me around these past few  
weeks. A third DUI doesn't look  
very good and the wife is already  
pissed, so it's nice knowing your  
old buddy has your back

Terry looks distraught.

TERRY

Don't thank me Fitz, I'm not doing much

PATRICK

I know it's not much, but it's something, and I've noticed it. It's hard knowing who your true friends are in this world, and I know you are one of them. I know I can count on you

Terry is silent, looks nervous.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Terry and Patrick walk into their office building where the police are waiting for them.

DETECTIVE 1

Are you Patrick Fitzgerald?

PATRICK

Yeah that's me

Detective 2 cuffs him.

DETECTIVE 1

Mr. Fitzgerald, you have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used in a court of law-

Patrick is visibly agitated and confused.

PATRICK

What the hell am I being arrested for?

DETECTIVE 2

You have been accused of committing multiple counts of fraud, Mr. Fitzgerald

PATRICK

Fraud? What? I never committed no fraud! There has to be a mistake!

Patrick turns to Terry who is watching from the sidelines.

PATRICK (CONT'D)  
Termite tell them I'm innocent!

Terry turns and walks away.

PATRICK (CONT'D)  
Terry! What is going on? Did you do  
this?!

Terry doesn't respond, continues walking off. The detectives  
are dragging Patrick outside.

PATRICK (CONT'D)  
You son of a bitch! You goddamn son  
of a bitch I'm gonna fucking kill  
you!!!

INT. OFFICE BUILDING UPSTAIRS - MOMENTS LATER

Terry gets off the elevator and makes his way through a crowd  
of whispering employees all watching him. Patrick's  
unexpected arrest is the talk of the town. Terry enters his  
office, shuts the door, and sits down. He looks at his  
reflection in the mirror near his door.

TERRY  
You are rich, you are successful,  
and women want you. You are a god.

He pauses, then smiles.

TERRY (CONT'D)  
And man am I sexy

INT. JAIL, MIDDAY

A few weeks later, Terry visits Patrick during visitation in  
the jail he's been held in. Terry is waiting as Patrick sits  
down in front of Terry. They sit in silence and intensely  
examine each other for a while.

Finally, Patrick starts the conversation.

PATRICK  
Why did you do it?

TERRY  
I don't know. Maybe I thought you  
deserved it

PATRICK

What the hell did I do to deserve this? We're business partners! I thought you had my back. I thought you were my friend

TERRY

Friends? You thought we were friends? Are you kidding me?

Patrick stays silent.

TERRY (CONT'D)

You have tormented me since high school. You and the rest of the football team were always picking on me, belittling me, calling me names!

PATRICK

You set me up, you fucked with the company under my name, all because I call you Termite?!

TERRY

DON'T CALL ME THAT!

Terry takes a second to calm himself down. Patrick looks afraid of him, doesn't recognize him.

TERRY (CONT'D)

You came from money and you were captain of the football team who dated the captain of the cheerleading team. And then you guys were prom king and queen. And everybody looked up to you. And everybody wanted to be you and live your perfect life

PATRICK

So what?

TERRY

So everybody thought you were some sort of god. Except for me. I've always seen right through you. An insecure asshole whose dad beat him, so he took it out on whoever he deemed inferior

This clearly hits a nerve for Patrick.

PATRICK

That's enough.

TERRY

You've never understood why someone like you could ever feel threatened by someone like me. Someone weaker, smaller, less popular

PATRICK

I said that's enough

TERRY

You knew I had a crush on Claudia, so you went after her. Anything I wanted had to be yours

PATRICK

I don't know what you're talking about

TERRY

I was always smarter than you. I didn't need a squad of yes men to make me feel important. I didn't give a shit about your "social status". I was better than you, and you couldn't handle it

Patrick doesn't say anything to this.

TERRY (CONT'D)

I started my own tech company out of college. What did you do? You found a way to attach yourself to MY company! You can't let me have anything! But that changes now, because guess what? I am better than you, I am richer than you, I am more powerful than you, and I've been fucking your wife

Patrick doesn't react to this

TERRY (CONT'D)

You are in prison, and I am not

They sit in silence for a minute.

PATRICK

You're right. I'm no better than you. Or anyone for that matter. I am weak and insecure, and I've always taken it out on other people



TERRY

Yeah, a weak and insecure piece of sh-

PATRICK

-But I've always known that about myself.

This shuts Terry up.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

What can you say for yourself?

Terry is at a loss for words.

PATRICK (CONT'D)

You wanna say you're better than me?

TERRY

(Under his breath) I AM better than you

PATRICK

You claim you didn't care about my popularity in high school? You claim you're above all my bullshit? Look at you! It bothered you so much that you tried to ruin my life!

Terry starts appearing very agitated

TERRY

Stop talking

PATRICK

Trying to prove you're powerful by sleeping with another man's wife?! Really?! You're just as much of a pathetic low life, weak asshole as I am, if not more so.

TERRY

Enough!!

PATRICK

At least I can recognize my faults. You think you're a victim? Or that you're the only person in the world to have been picked on in high school? You aren't special!

TERRY

Well maybe don't treat people like dog shit for years and not expect to pay for it later

PATRICK

I may have treated you poorly, and I apologize, but this is a complete overreaction

TERRY

Overreaction or not, I'm not the one behind bars. I won, and that's all that matters in the end.

Patrick gets really close to Terry's face.

PATRICK

I have a team of lawyers that are gonna prove my innocence, and your ass will be thrown in prison for a loooooong time and everyone will know you're a fraud

Terry gets even more agitated.

TERRY

I am rich, I'm successful, and women want me! I am a god!! You? You're NOTHING

PATRICK

You're a pussy, and I've always known it

This completely sets Terry off, and he starts screaming and throwing stuff to the ground. He gets escorted out by security.

INT. TERRY'S HOUSE, MORNING

Terry wakes up in the morning and goes downstairs to find Claudia sitting on the couch with Kerry, crying.

TERRY

Hey, what's going on here?

KERRY

Good morning honey. Claudia has some news

CLAUDIA

We had a meeting with Patrick's  
lawyers today

She gets choked up.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)

They're predicting up to 15 years!

KERRY

Oh sweetie!

Kerry gives Claudia a hug. Terry stands in front of them,  
looking distraught.

CLAUDIA

Terry, can I talk to you? In  
private?

TERRY

Certainly

Terry brings Claudia into the dining room, as Kerry, unfazed,  
unpauses "The Real Housewives of Beverly Hills", which can be  
heard in the other room.

TERRY (CONT'D)

What's up?

CLAUDIA

I know you visited Patrick last  
week. He told me what you did

TERRY

Oh Claudia. I swear I can explain-

CLAUDIA

-It's okay, I'm not angry. I just  
want the truth. Did you do it? Did  
you commit the crime and put the  
blame on my husband?

Terry is overcome with emotion, and breaks down in tears.

TERRY

Yes! I'm sorry, I don't know what  
came over me! I've just had this  
hatred in me that's been brewing  
for so long, and I couldn't bear it  
anymore!

Claudia gently shushes him and caresses his hair as she tries  
to calm him down.

CLAUDIA

It's okay Terry, I understand.  
Patrick isn't an easy guy, he's  
never been

TERRY

I just thought that I deserved to  
have the last laugh, after all  
these years of his abuse

CLAUDIA

I know honey, I know

TERRY

And I just, I just could never get  
over you

There's a silent pause for a moment.

TERRY (CONT'D)

I've been in love with you since I  
was fourteen years old, and that  
imbecile stole you from me

There is another pause as Claudia appears to be in deep  
thought.

CLAUDIA

I love you too

This makes Terry smile, and proceeds to kiss her.

CLAUDIA (CONT'D)

I want to be with you

TERRY

I'll leave her, I'll do it. I'll do  
anything to start my life over with  
you

In the background, one of the housewives from the show Kerry  
is watching screams at one of the other housewives.

HOUSEWIFE

YOU MESSED WITH THE WRONG BITCH

They hear Kerry gasp, then giggle, then cheer.

TERRY

Go home and pack your things. I  
want you and the kids to move in  
here by tomorrow

CLAUDIA

Okay

They kiss again, before exiting the dining room. Claudia says a quick goodbye to Kerry, and leaves the house. Terry and Kerry are finally alone.

TERRY

I'm leaving you

KERRY

Excuse me?

TERRY

You heard me. I don't love you, I never have, and I want you out of here. Now.

Kerry simply chuckles.

KERRY

After all this time, after everything we've been through, you haven't changed. You are the same small, pathetic man you've always been

This appears to hit a nerve for Terry, but he doesn't say anything.

KERRY (CONT'D)

It's a shame, it's a reeeeeaaaal shame

She storms up the stairs.

KERRY (CONT'D)

You're going to regret the day you ever met me

She slams the door to their room behind her. Terry remains silent.

INT. TERRY'S HOUSE, LATER IN THE DAY

The door bell rings and Terry opens the door. It's the same two detectives who arrested Patrick weeks ago.

DETECTIVE 1

Terrance Witicker, you are under arrest

DETECTIVE 1 (CONT'D)

You have the right to remain  
silent. Anything you say can and  
will be used in a court of law-

Detective 2 cuffs him. Kerry watches from the top of the stairs, and Terry looks back at her. The detectives escort Terry to their car.

DETECTIVE 2

Mr Fitzgerald's wife came to us  
with a recording of your  
conversation. You're gonna be in  
the clink for a long time buddy

Terry doesn't react. He obeys the police, climbs into the cop car, and they drive off.

INT. KERRY'S HOUSE, NIGHT

Kerry and Claudia are snuggled up on the couch watching a nature documentary.

CLAUDIA

Patrick was released today. He's  
watching the kids tonight

KERRY

Oh that's great sweetie

CLAUDIA

And I told him he can keep the  
house because I'll be moving in  
here

Kerry smiles.

KERRY

I love you Claudia

CLAUDIA

I love you too, Kerry

They kiss, and continue watching TV

DOCUMENTARY NARRATOR

"Female lions, the primary hunters,  
usually hunt in packs, while male  
lions are typically known as the  
lazy recipient. Now, watch as the  
lionesses discretely approach and  
camouflage themselves while the  
zebra is distracted.

(MORE)

## DOCUMENTARY NARRATOR (CONT'D)

The predators then run after their prey, increasing their speed and strength as the lionesses pounces on the zebra, and start devouring their catch of the day"

Claudia smirks, and looks at Kerry. They gaze at each other for a second, before both bursting into laughter.

**THE END**