



Strung

Written By

Andrew Roberts

ANDREWJROBERTS.COM

ANDREWJROBERTS.COM
ANDREWJROBERTSDESIGN@GMAIL.COM

FADE IN

EXT. VANESSA'S HOME - DAY

On a cold winter day, a suburban house sits quietly in the snow. ELLIOT, early 20's, walks down the sidewalk. He's wearing a heavy winter coat, a scarf, and a beanie. He suddenly stops and looks up at the house. He uncrumples a piece of paper, reads it, and looks at the house again. He takes a deep breath, and approaches the front door.

He reaches the door, takes a deep breath, and knocks. No answer. He waits for a moment and then knocks again. Soon, the door opens and VANESSA, early 20's, stands in the doorway, wearing pajamas. She has a confused look on her face before it turns to disappointment.

VANESSA

Lot of nerve coming back.

ELLIOT

Vanessa, I'm- (so sorry)

VANESSA

(Interrupting)

How long has it been? Huh? Two years? Three? Four, even?

ELLIOT

Four years and two months, to be exact.

VANESSA

Four years later and you decide that now is a good idea for you to come back.

ELLIOT

Listen, I know how upset you are and I know the last thing you want to do is hear anything from me but, I'm just here to talk.

VANESSA

Well I don't have anything to say to you. So why don't you just get the fuck out of here?

She slams the door on him. He looks hurt. He takes a deep breath holding back tears. There's a long pause before he finally speaks up.

ELLIOT

You were right, okay? You were right. I've just been too scared. I wanted to come back and tell you how sorry I was.

Elliot starts crying. There's a pause. The door slowly opens again. Vanessa gestures inside.

VANESSA

Come on, let's get it over with.

INT. ENTRYWAY - CONTINUOUS

The entryway to the home is simple, mostly bare. There's a pile of shoes by the door, a coat rack with a few jackets and scarves hung up, and a small houseplant.

VANESSA

Go ahead. Might as well kick off your shoes for a bit. I'm going to get us something to drink. Make yourself comfortable.

She wanders off. Elliot takes off his coat and his scarf and hangs them up on the rack. He takes off his shoes and walks into the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The living room is nicely decorated with a few pieces of furniture scattered throughout. There's a coffee table near the couch with some magazines spread out on it. Elliot sits down on the couch and picks one of the magazines up, flipping through it. Vanessa enters, carrying two mugs of hot chocolate. There are candy canes sticking out of either mug. She hands one to Elliot and sits down. He looks into the cup and chuckles.

ELLIOT

Even got the marshmallows.

VANESSA

I've known you for too long to not throw them in.

ELLIOT

And you just happened to have some sitting around?

VANESSA

You've known me for too long to not think I always have marshmallows.

They both sit and drink in silence before Vanessa finally breaks.

VANESSA

What made you think that now, of all times, was a good time for you to come crawling back home?

ELLIOT

I mean, every day that answer just gets worse and worse.

VANESSA

It does, doesn't it? You just up and leave one day and I think I may never see you again.

ELLIOT

Well, you're seeing me now.

VANESSA

Not for long, if I can help it.

She takes another drink.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Where did you go, anyway? What poor sap had to deal with you when you left?

ELLIOT

I lived with some friends for a while. Got a couple jobs, lost a couple jobs. Even hitchhiked my way to the Dakotas.

VANESSA

And yet, never once, you thought to reach out to me.

ELLIOT

Every day I thought to reach out to you.

VANESSA

But you didn't.

ELLIOT

Don't have any money. Don't have a phone, don't have a car. I only got your address from an old friend of yours when I decided enough was enough.

VANESSA

Sure took you long enough to decide that.

ELLIOT

I couldn't stand another day.

VANESSA

You couldn't stand another day?! What about me? I couldn't stand a single day after you left! Because every day is another day where I got to wonder where the hell you went. It's another day where I had to wonder why you refused to stay. Another day where I had to ask myself, "How could you have been so awful that he didn't even consider taking you with him or even having the decency to say goodbye?"

ELLIOT

I wanted to take you but it- (just wasn't safe)

VANESSA

(Interrupting)

But it wasn't safe. Yeah, I know. I read the note. I read the note and then I destroyed it before he could read what was on it, just like you told me to. Because we both knew damn well that, if he knew what you had said, he would tear apart what little he hadn't already destroyed.

ELLIOT

By the looks of it, you're still blaming me for what he did.

VANESSA

Like hell I do. I don't blame you for what he did. His actions were his, and I promise you I have never forgiven him any of the shit he did.

Vanessa leans onto the edge of her seat.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

I do blame you for your actions, especially because you were too

(MORE)

VANESSA (CONT'D)

much of a coward to own up to any of it.

ELLIOT

I wanted to get out so I could find somewhere safe to bail you out to!

VANESSA

Well, you're back. Where's this safe place you're so excited to show me?

Elliot stares silently at the cup of hot chocolate. He grabs his hat and pulls it off, setting it in his lap. Vanessa leans back into her chair.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

Shocking. You never found it. You just left me in the dust// with some- (dirtbag, piece of shit)

ELLIOT

(Interrupting)

I didn't want to leave you.

Vanessa jumps out of her seat.

VANESSA

But you did! That's the point you still aren't getting! You didn't want to but you still fucking left! You left me to fend for myself with a shitty and abusive father while you threw all your problems to the wind! And you didn't truly care about anybody but yourself until all of those problems caught up to you! So now you get to crawl back to your sister and beg for her forgiveness because you suddenly realize that you were wrong. Well, guess what? I don't think I'm in the position to give you that forgiveness! It's been four fucking years and not one fucking word from you since you left! Personally, I think you fucked up so bad that I should kick your ass out of my house and leave you on your own. Who gives a shit if you make it or not.

She takes a step back and stares at him, trying to calm down. He's too shocked to speak, he stares into his mug. Silently, Vanessa picks up her mug, turns around, and walks back to the kitchen. Elliot takes a deep breath, stands up, and walks toward the entryway.

INT. ENTRYWAY - CONTINUOUS

Elliot puts his hat back on, grabs his jacket and puts it on. He picks up the scarf and puts it on top of the jacket. He sits down and puts on his shoes. He stands back up, walks to the door, and opens it, he starts to walk out the door.

VANESSA (O.C.)

(Quietly)

I told you I *should* kick you out of my house.

Elliot stops.

VANESSA (CONT'D)

But after what you put me through, I can't bear to send you through that. We are family, after all. Even if we are a real shitty one.

Elliot slowly turns around and faces Vanessa. In her hand is an old piece of paper that has clearly been crumpled multiple times. Vanessa looks up with tears in her eyes.

VANESSA

I never destroyed it. I couldn't stand the idea of losing you for good.

She hands him the paper. He looks at it, tears forming in his eyes. He slowly looks up and walks toward Vanessa. They embrace, both crying softly.

ELLIOT

(Softly)

I guess it would have been safer with you.

VANESSA

Welcome back home, Elliot.