

WALL

Written by

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INT. VACANT STUDIO APARTMENT - DAY

DAPHNE (31), shoulders perpetually hunched as if she feels guilty for the space she occupies. Looks around. Cautious.

Yellowed walls. Busted vertical blinds. Gnarled brown wall-to-wall carpet that hasn't been replaced since 1976. Stains to prove it. Total shit hole.

The LANDLORD (74), stern grandfatherly vibe, fusses with a set of keys.

LANDLORD
(Matter of fact)
Boyfriend? Husband?

DAPHNE
No.

LANDLORD
You are alone?

DAPHNE
Yes.

LANDLORD
(Eyeing her)
Hmm.
(Beat)
Kitchen is here.

He hobbles into the kitchen. Drawing Daphne's eyes to-

WALL, eight feet wide, open on each side with entrances to the small kitchen. Aglow in afternoon light. MAGNIFICENT.

Daphne steps closer. She BEAMS.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

A shiny, new key poised in Daphne's hand.

She exhales, anxious. Primps her hair.

INT. VACANT APARTMENT - DAY

Daphne ambles in, dressed in a sundress too nice for moving. Cardboard box under one arm. Admires Wall. Bashful.

DAPHNE
(To Wall)
Hi.

KNOCK. KNOCK.

Daphne glances at the front door. Perplexed.

KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK.

 DAPHNE
 (To Wall)
 Are you expecting anyone?

INT. FRONT DOOR - DAY

Daphne slides the security chain in place. Cracks the door, chain taut. On the other side-

OMAR (31), bit of a doof. But sweet. Clean cut. Always manages to come off a little too desperate. He freezes the second he sees her.

She stares at him.

 OMAR
 ...We don't have rats any more.

 DAPHNE
 ...

 OMAR
 I mean... we used to. But we don't
 any more. I live here. Not here,
 here.
 (Points in the direction
 of Wall)
 One door down.
 (Beat)
 Didn't you go to John Marshall
 High?

 DAPHNE
 Yeah.

 OMAR
 Omar. We had Mythology and Set
 Construction.

 DAPHNE
 I remember. Daphne.

 OMAR
 The only girl who wanted to use the
 power tools. I remember.

He most certainly does - and quite fondly. Daphne shifts.

OMAR (CONT'D)
(Re: That sounded weird)
Sorry. Are you okay?

DAPHNE
What do you mean?

OMAR
Do you need help?

DAPHNE
...

OMAR
Moving boxes or... furniture.

DAPHNE
No. Thank you.

OMAR
I heard about Dan. I'm so sorry.

She forces a smile. Nods.

OMAR (CONT'D)
If you ever need anything just...
knock.

DAPHNE
I'm good.

He moves for a hug. Daphne CLOSES the door. LOCKS the
deadbolt. AND the doorknob.

INT. VACANT APARTMENT - DAY

Daphne GRUNTS. SHOVES an ENORMOUS BOX into the room. The box
gets STUCK. She HEAVES to pick it up. The bottom BURSTS.
Contents CRASH to the floor.

DAPHNE
Goddamnit.

LATER

Daphne SPLAYED out on the floor next to Wall. Scattered boxes
and sparse furniture - suggestive of a new beginning.

INT. FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Daphne double checks ALL the LOCKS. Secures the security
chain. Drags a READING CHAIR to block the door. Satisfied.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

WHIIRRR. Daphne inflates the saddest twin air mattress ever.

A LITTLE LATER

Daphne lies on the air mattress, facing Wall.

DAPHNE

I have a really hard time sleeping.

WALL

...

DAPHNE

(Delighted)

Yeah.

She smiles at Wall, coy.

DAPHNE

Little spoon.

She rolls onto her side. Her back to Wall. Snuggles in.

INT. APARTMENT - MORNING

KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK.

Daphne stirs. Groggy. Air mattress half-deflated. KNOCK-KNOCK. She winces in pain as she battles to get up. GRUMBLES.

INT. FRONT DOOR - MORNING

Daphne checks the peephole. Hesitates. KNOCK-KNOCK. Muscles the chair away from the door. Opens it.

Omar. Bags under his eyes - immediately remorseful.

OMAR

I woke you up. I'm so sorry.

She squints at him, bleary-eyed. Notices a large cluster of DEEP SCARS that peek out from his shirt collar.

OMAR

I was just gonna see if you wanted to go- Or... if you wanted anything from the corner store. They have really solid coffee. And danishes.

(MORE)

OMAR (CONT'D)

Like. Incredible danishes. Mind blowing.

DAPHNE

You still have a sweet tooth.

OMAR

(Surprised)

Yeah.

DAPHNE

What time is it?

He checks his watch.

OMAR

Zero-seven-hundred. I'm so sorry.
It's earlier than I thought.

DAPHNE

When did you get up?

OMAR

Three. Sleep and I have a...
tenuous relationship.

He watches her reaction - hoping his vocabulary will win him some points. Nada.

OMAR

Do you want anything? My treat.

DAPHNE

No.

She moves to close the door.

DAPHNE

...Thanks.

OMAR

Oh- I found some old yearbook
photos if you want them-

DAPHNE

That's okay.

OMAR

If you need anything-

Daphne SHUTS the door.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Daphne sits on the floor in front of Wall, unpacking a box. Unwraps a crystal prism. Touched by the sight of it.

DAPHNE

My mom gave this to me.

She holds it by the string in the sunlight. Spins it. RAINBOWS swirl across Wall.

She grabs a small stack of OLD PHOTOS of YOUNG DAPHNE (3-5).

DAPHNE

I look so happy.

She shows Wall. Flips through a few, stops on-

A photo of herself at FOUR and a BOY a few years older than her. His arm around her.

She RIPS the photo in half. TOSSES it in a nearby trashcan.

LATER

Daphne stands, studying Wall.

Wall, aglow in afternoon light.

Notices-

Every BLEMISH, PATCHWORK, and SCAR on Wall now clear.

Grazes her thumb over a patched divot. Runs her hand across Wall. Exploring. Traces her fingers along a large scrape.

Her hand wanders until she finds a huge patched hole at head height. She makes a fist, as if she were about to punch Wall. She studies it - the size and positioning look right.

She looks at Wall with empathy. Clearly affected.

DAPHNE

Would you like to have dinner
tonight?

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lit candles. Romantic. Daphne sits cross-legged on the floor in front of Wall. A half-eaten bowl of boxed mac and cheese.

She gazes at Wall, admiring.

DAPHNE
You just seem so... strong.

 WALL
...

 DAPHNE
 (Demure)
I don't know about that.
 (Beat)
I haven't felt that lately.

 WALL
...

 DAPHNE
How long have you been here?

 WALL
...

 DAPHNE
You must have seen so many people.
So many moments. Do you have any
favorites so far?

 WALL
...

 DAPHNE
Both.

 WALL
...

 DAPHNE
 (Bashfully)
You're just saying that.
 (Beat)
What about... Any difficult ones?

 WALL
...

She *listens*. Moved. Places a comforting palm on Wall.

 DAPHNE
I understand.

She admires Wall.

 DAPHNE
Thank you. For just being here.

INT. APARTMENT - NEW LOVE MONTAGE - DAY & NIGHT

Daphne sits curled up, reading. Glances up from her book at Wall and smiles. Playfully returns to her book. Distracted.

Daphne sits propped against Wall, TV glow flickers. *Laughs*. Rests her head on Wall - as if leaning on a lover's shoulder.

She shows various SCARS to Wall. Sharing the story of each.

LATER

Daphne runs her hand over Wall. Presses her ear to Wall. Closes her eyes and listens. As if listening for a heartbeat.

The faint sound of a LOVE SONG muffled through the walls. Something like a slow cover of "*Fools Rush In*", coming from Omar's apartment.

Daphne listens. Gently pushes off Wall. Her movements evolve into a strange, beautiful dance.

As the song finishes, she rests her head on Wall. Looks at Wall. Yearning.

LATER

Daphne stands in front of Wall. Candlelight flickers on her face. She peels each shoulder of her dress down. Stands, insinuated, naked before Wall. Approaches.

Kisses Wall. Stops herself.

 DAPHNE

 I'm sorry.

Covers herself. Vulnerable.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Daphne lies in a pile of blankets on the floor next to Wall.

 DAPHNE

 (Forced)

 Morning.

INT. HALLWAY/MAILBOXES - DAY

Daphne carries a fresh bouquet of flowers.

OMAR (O.S.)
(Flirtatious)
Morning, Jane.

Daphne turns to see-

Omar, manilla envelope and small paper bag in hand. Swoops down to pick up MAIL at the feet of, JANE (92).

OMAR (CONT'D)
Here.

Offers his arm to Jane. She takes it. Swats him. But he spots-

OMAR (CONT'D)
(Calling out)
DAPHNE.

Daphne hurries down the hall away from Omar.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

The flowers, now in a vase, sit on a side table near Wall.

Daphne examines the bouquet. Repositions it - seeking some sense of control.

DAPHNE
I'm sorry about last night. It
was... too fast for me.
(Timid)
Are we okay?

WALL
...

Daphne smiles, at ease - their apparent conflict resolved.
KNOCK. KNOCK.

DAPHNE
For Pete's sake.

INT. FRONT DOOR/HALLWAY - DAY

She peers through the peep-hole. No one.

Confused. She opens the door.

TAP. An envelope propped against the door falls at her feet.
A paper bag next to it. "MIND BLOWING" written on the bag.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Daphne approaches Wall as she pulls a danish from the paper bag. Takes a bite. Surprised, she breaks into a subtle *happy food dance* - Omar was right, it's delicious. She glances up at Wall as if Wall caught her dance. She smirks, embarrassed.

She opens the envelope. Leafs through-

A few old YEARBOOK PHOTOS of Daphne's BROTHER, at 17. Behind that, a MEMORIAL CARD with a recent photo of him. Smiling.

Daphne blanches. FUMES with anger.

She CRUSHES the memorial card in her fist and HURLS it across the room. PACES. Overwhelmed. She beelines to Wall.

Drowning in a flash flood of emotions. She clenches her fists. Full of RAGE that melts away to AGONY. Tears stream down her face. She grasps at Wall - desperate to be held.

But Wall can't help her. Further igniting her FURY. She looks at Wall, as if looking into a mirror. She SCREAMS. Channels every emotion into one swift, HARD-

KICK.

Her foot PIERCES Wall, leaving a GAPING HOLE in its wake.

DAPHNE

NO!

She clasps her hands over her mouth. Sees-

A strata of RAT SHIT inside Wall.

She dry heaves. And-

SOBS. Collapses onto the floor. Crushed.

KNOCK-KNOCK-KNOCK. She turns to the door. Pissed.

INT. FRONT DOOR - DAY

Daphne THROWS the door open.

Omar. Instantly regrets his intrusion.

DAPHNE

WHAT?

OMAR
(Sincere)
I- I'm so sorry. I heard you...

Crying. But he can't bring himself to say it. And he doesn't have a chance because- she SLAMS the door in his face.

INT. HALLWAY - SAME

Omar nods - how could he be so stupid.

INT. FRONT DOOR - SAME

Daphne remains in the doorway. Reeling.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Daphne talks on a corded landline phone mid-conversation. She braces for a scolding. Her eyes widen in shock.

DAPHNE
(On the phone)
Can't they just patch it? ...Just
clean it out and-

She stifles. The wind knocked out of her.

DAPHNE
I need more time.

She cries silently - masking her true feelings.

DAPHNE
Tomorrow. Thank you.

Defeated. She hangs the phone up. Fights to keep it together.

INT. APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Daphne stares at Wall. The hole temporarily patched with masking tape. She walks up, places her palms on Wall.

Rests her head on him like a fallen lover. Breaks down.

DAPHNE
Please don't leave me.

She hears... Faint, muted crying. She looks at Wall. Stunned.

Listens closely. A distinct vocalization and it dawns on her-
It's not Wall. It's Omar.

INT. HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

Daphne peers her head out the front door. Paces one door
down. Stops. Builds up the courage... KNOCK. KNOCK.

The door opens. Omar, composed - not used to being on this
end of the equation.

OMAR

...Hi.

DAPHNE

I'm in love with a wall but it's
full of shit.

OMAR

What?

DAPHNE

It's full of rat shit. So they have
to tear it down.

Omar stares at her. Speechless.

INT. APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Daphne and Omar stand staring at Wall in silence. Daphne on
the verge of a meltdown - always the outsider. Omar notices.

OMAR

I... I fall in love all the time.
But at a distance. Soak in every
little thing I can. Fall in love.
But, I never say anything. That way
no one ever gets hurt.

Something in Omar's words resonates with Daphne. She looks at
him - seeing him in a new light. Someone who understands.

Their eyes lock-

OMAR

I should go.

He turns to bolt for the door. Daphne, letting him go-

DAPHNE

-Omar.

He turns back to her.

 DAPHNE (CONT'D)
It's never really safe. Is it?

 OMAR
No.

She soaks this in.

 DAPHNE
I know you might have this vision
of me in your mind but...
 (Beat)
I was close with my brother, up to
a point. He... I don't totally
blame him. I think my grandma must
have been abusing him too but... I
thought a part of me would feel
relieved when he died. But...

She shrugs, resigned.

 OMAR
I'm so sorry.

 DAPHNE
No, I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. You've
always been so kind.

 OMAR
Sometimes people hand us something
we never asked to carry. It just
becomes a part of us. We never get
to put it down. Not really. But
what we do get, is this x-ray
vision to see...

 DAPHNE
...Everyone who carries something
heavy too.

He nods. Keeping a respectful distance.

 DAPHNE (CONT'D)
Omar. You said if I ever needed
anything...

He braces as she struggles to get the words out.

 DAPHNE (CONT'D)
I need a hug.

He soaks her in a beat. Opens his arms to her. She notices-

Scars akin to the ones on his neck litter the inside of his arm - shrapnel scars if you had to guess, and you'd be right.

She reaches for his scars. Stops herself. He nods in consent.

Runs her fingers over his scars. Meets his gaze.

Omar, just as vulnerable. Their eyes lock.

He gently takes her hand. Rests it on his chest.

She looks at him. Surprised. Leans in and-

Puts her ear to his chest - an echo of what she's done to Wall before but... We hear Omar's heartbeat. Racing.

She surrenders her head onto his chest. Melting into each other. Filled with something they both longed for.

Their embrace, framed by Wall.