

No Visible Scars

An Ugly Story

About the Naked Truth

Three film industry heavyweights, a Producer, a Director and an Actor, who've recently emerged unscathed and 'uncancelled' by the stringy sinews of scandal, do their best to cement their seemingly unblemished names by offering up a vast chunk of their own personal wealth as a fund to be bid and bargained for by various hopeful writers and filmmakers, all bartering for their own dream.

However, temptations manifest when an audaciously ambitious and remarkably alluring blonde finds her way into their rented accommodation the night before the film festival where their new fund is to launch, and demonstrates her naked ambition, quite literally, by stripping off in front of them to deliver a monologue from her recently scribed screenplay for their consideration.

Significantly impressed by her acting, her writing, and her body, on their instruction, champagne is opened and served by the only other resident in the beachside condo, their reserved and gently dignified male housekeeper whose perturbed eyes betray his inner disquiet at the evening's proceedings.

But neither he, nor they, could have guessed at the ramifications, until dawn the following morning, as they emerge thick headed and bleary eyed from a night of celebratory drunken chaos, of which no memory can be pulled, to the news of the body of a naked blonde, discovered recently deceased on the remote beach, yards from their condo.

Despite accruing an extra guest, in the form of a brunette, awoken in the Actor's bed, with vague but more cohesive memories of the night before, they're unable to write events off as a 'boys-will-be-men-will-be-idiots' escapade, their panicked hysteria arising from their mistrust of each other's truest natures, as well as their own. A panic compounded by the shrilly ringing telephone and their housekeeper delivering the message that a local detective is en route to speak to them about a missing person.

Scrabbling around like teenagers trying to right the house post-party, they frantically hide evidence of what may or may not have occurred and enlist the help of their brash and outspoken PR Agent to head over and help manage the situation.

And into the chaotic scene of discarded clothing, drug remnants, guessed at accusations and half-mad hangover-panic a cool young female detective emerges like a spectre, her eyes near dead with darkness, unimpressed by their status and fame, sceptical of their persuasions of purity, as she sizes them up like wolves with blood on their muzzles, roaming feet away from a fresh kill.

With barely a word, and eyes that have seen it all, she soon cuts through the PR and propaganda nodding knowingly as they stumble and trip over their fragmented shards of memory with a combined story of a refined and respectable evening's entertainment for the would be hopeful and her on spec script before toasting her good health and success and sending her on her way.

Their overall uncomfortableness, already thick enough to cut with a knife, thickens up to the layers of a Hitchcock plot when the Detective thanks them for their information about the washed-up corpse of the woman on the beach but informs them she's there to speak to them about a missing man.

With the diary of a cohort from their first foray into filmmaking in her hand like a smoking gun, the Detective questions them about their relationship with the apparently damaged lonely, albeit genius of a man, and what, if any, involvement they individually or as a group may have had in his sudden and suspicious disappearance ten years prior.

From there on in recollections, interpretations, and suspicions flip in and out of the present and past and a story is woven as tight as the work of the highest priced script doctor in the Hollywood Hills.

As the actual plot events unfold, they reveal a mystery adorned with the weights of trauma and survival, of hope, guilt, revenge and resilience and wear those issues like a cloak to hide the real menacing intent and implications underneath.

The question of 'why' hangs over everything and everyone until the perturbing truth begins to emerge.

And it is only on the concluding turn of the page of the ever deepening mystery that a Director, an Actor, A Producer, a Housekeeper, a PR Agent, a One Night Stand, a Detective and a Body on the Beach understand why they've been brought together centre stage for a final act which will change the ending of all their stories, and mean life will never be the same again.

