

A Cup of Tea

Written by

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MUSIC CUE: "Love is like a Cigarette" by Duke Ellington

INT. HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

There are multiple still-pan shots. (Living room, Dining room, kitchen)

MED SHOT-KITCHEN

She prepares cuts of vegetables. (On the counter, all necessary ingredients will be next to Nicole's cutting board)

HIGH SHOT

Overhead Nicole prepares food and cuts veggies in sync with the song. She places chopped veggies on a baking pan. She drizzles oil, salt, pepper, and rosemary.

CLOSE SHOT

Nicole sets the oven to 375 degrees

HIGH SHOT

Overhead Nicole puts the baking pan in the oven. She grabs a pan and places it on the stove. She turns on the stove, then drizzles oil, and puts a slice of butter in the pan

Nicole pushes her sleeve back to expose her wrist watch. A few seconds are sped up until the butter melts. She swirls the pan around in a circular motion.

CUT TO:

On the counter, she slaps a New York strip and pats it dry. She places it on the pan.

NICOLE

(Sighs)

WIDE SHOT- SIDE VIEW

The camera focuses on Nicole and follows her. Nicole dries her hands with the hand towel hanging on the oven handles. She walks to the sink to wash her hands, singing faintly to the music.

(O.F)

(Knocks heard from door)

Nicole turns around, revived from dissociation and alert.

END MUSIC CUE

WIDE SHOT

Camera focuses on the front door. Knocking sounds come from the door again.
Nicole enters shot and goes to the door.

CUT TO: CLOSE UP

Nicole looks through peeper. Camera cuts to Barbra through peeper. She is holding cookies. opens the door for her neighbor Barbra holding a small tray of cookies.

CUT TO: WIDE SHOT

Nicole opens the door for her neighbor Barbra.

BARBRA

(Smiles warmly)

Nicole!

Barbra opens one arm to hug Nicole. They hug, swing side by side, and let go.

BARBRA

So how have you been?

Barbra glances down at the cookies and hands them to Nicole.

Nicole takes the cookies, Her smile is weaker now as her eyes grow distant.

BARBRA (V.O)

I made some cookies! Been practicing and y'know—Had a few extra cookies in my last batch. Figured they were decent enough to share with ya.

CUT TO: LOW SHOT NICOLE

Nicole looks up at Barbra.

NICOLE

(Smiles wide, looking less genuine)

You've always been generous with us, you know? And...I've always appreciated that.

CUT TO: LOW SHOT BARBRA

Barbra smiles but her brows are furrowed with concern. She breaks into a nervous laugh.

CUT TO: LOW SHOT NICOLE

NICOLE

(Laughs along)

Their laughs die down quickly. Nicole leans her head against the door, returning to her dissociative state with nothing much to say. Barbra places a hand on Nicole's arm. Nicole looks at Barbra confusingly.

CUT TO: LOW SHOT BARBRA

Barbra looks genuinely concerned now. She is no longer smiling.

BARBRA

Nicole, I'm gonna speak plainly. I'm worried about you.

CUT TO: LOW SHOT NICOLE

NICOLE

Why's that?

CUT TO: LOW SHOT BARBRA

Barbra goes quiet.

BARBRA

(Stammers)

Has, uh, has everything been okay?

CUT TO: LOW SHOT NICOLE

NICOLE

What is it that insinuates an issue?

(Nicole sounds bitter almost, her words should feel like poison)

Barbra retracts her hand hesitantly and remains quiet.

CUT TO: LOW SHOT NICOLE

Nicole's jaw tenses and twitches. She then lowers her head.

NICOLE

(Sighs)

I'm sorry. These cookies look amazing.

Nicole looks back up at Barbra with a softer smile now.

NICOLE (CONT'D)

I can't wait to enjoy these tonight!

SLOW PAN: LOW SHOT BARBRA

BARBRA

Come by tomorrow for some tea?

Or...We can take a dip in the ocean and then have some oysters.

CUT TO: LOW SHOT NICOLE

Nicole lifts her head again.

NICOLE

Of course. I'll come by at..11:30 we say?

BARBRA

11:30 then.

CUT TO: MED SHOT BARBRA (Opposite direction of Barbra's departure)

Barbra smiles, the end of her lip twitching slightly. They take a step back and give Nicole a departing nod. Barbra walks away. Nicole lingers watches until Babra is O.S

WIDE SHOT-INT. FRONT DOOR

Nicole leans against the door with her eyes closed and cookies in one of her hands. She walks O.S after a few seconds.

CUT TO: MED SHOT INT. LIVING ROOM

She walks to the living room. While standing behind the couch, she eyes the entrance of the kitchen.

CUT TO: CLOSE SHOT-KITCHEN

The meat is still searing in the pan.

CUT TO: MED SHOT NICOLE

Nicole looks down at the couch and takes a seat. She sets the cookies on the table and as she relaxes, her phone begins to ring on the coffee table. She glances at her phone

CUT TO: CLOSE SHOT OF PHONE

Caller I.D shows 'MOM'

CUT TO: LONG SHOT

The phone continues to ring. Nicole waits until the phone stops ringing. Smoke enters shot, and Nicole looks at the kitchen entrance. Quickly, she stands and grabs her phone.

Camera TRACKS Nicole as she rushes to the kitchen, looking at her phone to find a voicemail MOM left her.

HIGH SHOT- KITCHEN

Overhead, we see the audio voicemail. Nicole starts the voicemail.

MED SHOT- NICOLE

Nicole turns off the heat and waves the washcloth over the pan.

VOICEMAIL MOM(V.O)

Hey..Lovey Dovey. This is mom.

The camera pans upwards and zooms in on the phone. Nicole moved around, going to the sink to wash the burnt pan and to the oven to remove the platter of vegetables.

VOICEMAIL MOM(CONT'D V.O)

We don't talk much. And I know that you've told me before that..you would be busy. And you would be traveling. And despite how much it hurt- Nicole rests her hand on the counter. Smoke is still coming from the pan. The phone is silent for only a few seconds.

VOICEMAIL MOM(CONT'D V.O)

Please call me back. I miss your voice and, and (voice cracks) I'm so worried about-

Nicole pauses the voice message.

MUSIC CUE: "Love is like a Cigarette" by Duke Ellington

Nicole takes a deep breath and sighs. She removes the smoking pan from the stove and sets it on the counter.

TRANSITION-DINING ROOM

HIGH SHOT-TABLE

overhead, Nicole sets a fully prepared dish on the table. Utensils are already on the table, along with other condiments.

MED SHOT NICOLE

She opens a wine bottle, and pours a glass.

END MUSIC CUE

MED SHOT

DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Nicole sets the wine on the table. She stares at the plated meal.

CLOSE SHOT- CLOCK

The camera focuses on the clock. It reads 5:45 p.m. The ticking echoes through the silent room.

WIDE SHOT

Nicole's stance looks wobbly, she has her hand on a chair.

KNOCK ON THE DOOR (O.F)

Camera pans to TRACK Nicole as she goes to open the door.

HENRY (O.S)

Mm, evening Love.

NICOLE (O.S)

(Tiredly)

Hey, hey!

They re-enter the shot. They hug, Henry kisses Nicole's forehead. Glancing at the table he frowns, still hugging Nicole.

HENRY

There's only one plate on the table?

Nicole lets go of Henry

NICOLE (O.S)

Yeah, uh, I'm not hungry. Barbra invited me over for oysters.

HENRY

I'm so glad you got out.

Camera TRACKS Nicole as she leaves the Dining room. Camera Cuts to closer shot of HALLWAY.

HENRY (O.S)

You haven't gone out in a while!

NICOLE

(Scoffs)

That's true..I'm going to go ahead and use the bathroom.

HENRY (O.S)

I hope I get to see some color on your skin tonight!

Nicole stops in her tracks. She slowly continues walking to the bathroom.

HENRY (O.S CONT'D)

You should go out more, take a hike.

(PAUSE)

You'll be sitting with me, right?

Nicole stands at the doorway of the Bathroom.

NICOLE

I'll be quick and join you, dear.

MED SHOT-BATHROOM INT.

Nicole closes the door and walks up to the bathroom mirror. There, she stares into the mirror.

HENRY (O.S)

(Muffled

How was the rest of your day today? Looks like you've cleaned up since I left.

Nicole looks to her side and down to the ground.

LOW SHOT-BATHROOM

The camera faces the corpse of a woman leaning against the wall. Her face is covered by her messy pulled hair, but blood can be clearly seen on her clothes.

CUT TO: WIDE SHOT- DINING ROOM

Henry cuts into his steak and takes a bite. He chews slowly.

HENRY

(CLEARS THROAT)

Mm..huh, the steak's burnt Hon.

Henry takes a sip of his wine and sets it back down. He takes another bite into his vegetables, and once again reaches for his wine glass and takes a longer sip. After swallowing his food and preparing for another bite, he stops moving, looks up and frowns. His breathing begins to sound raspier and his face redder.

Henry claws at his neck and punches his chest a few times. He slips and falls to the floor, suffocating.

CUT TO: MED SHOT- BATHROOM

Nicole begins to cry quietly. She cups her face into both of her hands and inhales shakily.

CUT TO: OVERHEAD SHOT- DINING ROOM

Henry lays on the floor lifeless. Nicole walks into frame and kneels by Henry's body. She lifts his head up and leans it against her stomach.

Nicole caresses his hair before she drops his head back to the floor.

Nicole stands up and goes to grab Henry's arms and drag him O.S

BEDROOM - HIGH SHOT

Overhead the bed, Henry's head enters the frame and is thrown onto the bed. Nicole lifts Henry's arms and aligns them on his chest, and closes his eyes. She sits by his corpse for a few seconds, then walks O.S

CUT TO:

MED SHOT- KITCHEN

There is a teapot on the stove. It begins to whistle. Nicole enters the shot. She turns off the stove, grabs a teacup, and sets it on the counter. She pours a cup of tea, lifts it upwards to her face, and gently blows.

CUT TO:

WIDE SHOT- LIVING ROOM

Nicole sits down on a couch, a cup of tea in her hand. She places it on a coffee table, next to Barbra's cookies. She sits and stares at the coffee table. Nicole reaches for a cookie.

CLOSE UP TO HAND

Her hand pauses in front of the camera, holding the cookie. She takes a bite of the cookie. Nicole chews, smiling. She picks up her cup of tea, blows on it once more, and takes a sip.

MUSIC CUE: MUSIC CUE: "Love is like a Cigarette" by Duke Ellington

Still smiling, she takes another bite of her cookie, followed by a longer sip of tea. Camera pans back into a wider shot. Nicole begins to show similar symptoms as Henry.

Eventually, she falls to the floor, suffocating.

CUT TO BLACK

END CREDITS - MUSIC CONTINUES THROUGH CREDITS