

THEM APPLES

BY

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EXT. CHURCH GROUNDS - EARLY MORNING

Birds sing from the trees and bells ring from the Church.

SUPER: THEM APPLES

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

A peaceful place of faith and tranquility. Early day sunlight shines through stained glass windows.

Jesus.

Choral music resounds throughout the hall but is gradually overpowered by mutterings and swears.

EVE (20), as if needing to pee, walks on the spot in uncertainty, by a Jesus painting.

She wears a graceful velvet dress and matching bow-flat shoes that don't match her ungraceful movements. The clothes creased, hair tangled and slight smudges of make up under her blood-shot eyes - she's been up all night.

Eve's neurotic trance and self-talk is interrupted as a PRIEST enters through the back door and makes his way into a confessional, immersed in the Holy Bible he's reading.

Eve begins to walk slowly towards him from the end of the hall but the Priest takes no notice and is already in the confessional.

Suddenly she's running through the pews frantically to get the Priest. Bit keen.

INT. A DARK CONFESSIONAL - CONTINUOUS

A contrast to the frantic running - Eve sits down in the confessional with reverence. The PRIEST'S legs sit out from behind a drawn purple curtain.

Eve sits down, and waits for the Priest to speak. Nothing.

EVE

Em... Forgive me father for I have sinned.

The curtain pulls back revealing the Priest.

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST

Oh sorry! I didn't see you there.  
Was reading the Holy Bible. Really  
into it.

EVE

Sorry I just... I'm a bit agitated.  
I don't really know why I'm here.

The Priest gets comfortable, tucking his bible away and  
leaning in to listen.

PRIEST

You don't?  
Why don't you start with telling me  
of your sins.

EVE

(using her fingers to count  
the Holy Trinity)  
So... In the name of the Father,  
the Son and the Holy Spirit. I'm  
Eve and this is my first ever  
confession. I have offended God  
with the sin of envy.

The Priest doesn't give a response Eve wants.

EVE (CONT'D)

So... that's one of the seven  
deadly sins right? I thought... I'm  
pretty sure it's quite serious  
because... I'm envious all the time  
and I don't know how to stop...

PRIEST

Envy, envy... let's see.  
Who are you envious of?

A silence as Eve is embarrassed. The Priest shrugs.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

And...why?

EVE

So... I have a guy... a boyfriend.  
Rudy.

INT. FLAT LIVING ROOM - DAY

RUDY (21), Eve's boyfriend, attractive in his way of confidence, messy hair, energy drink in hand and spread out on the sofa in his boxers like he's the master of something - EVE sits near, watching him from the other end of the couch.

Another girl, DONNA (20) on her laptop on the floor in the background.

*EVE (V.O)*

*He's really nice to me.*

Rudy takes a sip and lifts up a bundle of paper from his lap.

RUDY

"The Japanese Vale of the Autumnal Green' by Eve Appleton"

*EVE (V.O)*

*And he's honest.*

RUDY

Kind of a shit title.  
Bit pretentious.

*EVE (V.O)*

*Really, he's just amazing.*

Rudy laughs then does his 'oops what have I said' face as Eve tries not to look upset.

Rudy tables the script then taps his lips. Eve leans in and gives him a kiss.

He picks it back up and continues to recite the script.

RUDY

(skim reading)

"Panel answers back, yes, yes, no, no." Okay so this scene.

(fast-reading)

"A lonely boring tree stands center stage right, swaying to the vibe of his colourless dreary thoughts mirrored in the blinking of his eyes. A woman enters from stage left to stand in balanced proximity to the tree."

CUT TO:

INT. SMALL THEATRE

The scene hypothetically presented on a lit stage exactly how it was described. The ACTRESS is sporting a brown coat and the backdrop is of a city park. She starts to wander around the stage.

ACTRESS

I despise this tree.

RUDY, still in his boxers, leaned against the bar of the auditorium and watching critically.

The TREE tilts to regard the Actress.

TREE

Hey! That's *fucking* mean.

ACTRESS

I give myself to it, and it doesn't give anything back.

RUDY

Hold on. Stop there.

Rudy interrupts confidently but not rudely, the actors break. He flings himself onto the stage.

EVE stares at him poker-faced from the other side of the auditorium.

Rudy gestures at her with the energy-drink-occupied hand.

RUDY

Yeah, nice. I like this. Yeah.

He goes over to the Actress and moves her by the shoulders with ease a few steps to the side for no apparent reason.

RUDY

I feel like the first line should be: "*I fucking hate trees!*"

Eve laughs.

RUDY

And this tree in the background says:  
"*Hey! That's a bit mean.*

*You cunt.*"

It's funnier, right? Then instead of wandering aimlessly around the

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RUDY (cont'd)  
stage she could encompass- like  
circle - the tree and maybe kick it  
as she's talking.

Rudy acts out what he has in mind.

RUDY (CONT'D)  
And how are you planning to do the  
tree?

EVE  
So em... I don't know yet.

RUDY  
I feel like actually make it. Or  
maybe project it. I'll help you  
don't worry about it.

Eve jumps in her seat excited about Rudy's ideas then looks  
down and transitions to confused. She closes one eye and  
rubs her face before smiling at Rudy.

EVE  
You look pretty cool right now.

Rudy laughs at Eve and looks at her like he really likes  
her.

RUDY  
Why?

EVE  
I'm gonna take a picture of you.

A camera out of nowhere. SNAP.

INT.FLAT LIVING ROOM - DAY

Donna laughs at her laptop and the pair look at her.

RUDY  
What?

DONNA  
Nothing - just literally - ah  
nothing.

RUDY  
(to Eve)  
You know what? I Fuckin' hate  
Donna.

(CONTINUED)

Eve laughs. Rudy looks back at Donna.

RUDY  
Alright Donna?

INT. CONFESSIONAL - MORNING

EVE laughs to herself and plays with the printed photo in her hand, creased and crinkled.

EVE  
I have a photo of him here.

Eve begins to show the PRIEST the photo before realising it's unnecessary. The Priest trying to get a good look before she puts it down.

PRIEST  
I mean... that's difficult, yes.  
Okay, okay so this Rudy. He seems  
like he's good to you. He genuinely  
cares for you and your interests.  
Wouldn't you say?

EVE  
Em... yes.

PRIEST  
Then what's the issue? What are you  
jealous of?

EVE  
It's not like that. It's the way  
he's so good at things - it makes  
me think I'm not. And the way I  
react makes me think I'm insane.  
Sometimes I just... go a bit  
"mental".

EXT. CYCLE-PATH - DAY

An idyllic sun silhouettes EVE and RUDY cycling along a nature trail.

They both laugh as she reaches out to pull his trousers down from behind. Rudy smacks her hand away.

RUDY  
Cardio, cardio, cardio.

(CONTINUED)

They approach a picturesque green hill and Rudy stands up on the pedals, speeding off. Eve tries to push on and keep pace but Rudy is already on top of the hill among the green grass while she is left behind, her smile fading.

Rudy looks back for Eve and brakes, confused to see her sitting on a curb at the bottom of the hill, bike tossed to one side.

He cycles back down and approaches the cranky Eve throwing stones at the road. He tries not to laugh.

RUDY

What's up?

Eve makes a childish annoyed noise and hides her face in her knees. Rudy laughs now and sits down beside her. He tilts her head so he can see her face. Tears.

RUDY

What's wrong?

They both laugh.

EVE

I want to move. I want to live in the jungle.

RUDY

No you don't.

EVE

Yes I do.

RUDY

Because I'm faster on a bike? Move then.

EVE

I can't.

RUDY

Why not?

EVE

Because I love you, you poo.

RUDY

Why do you want to move away so bad then?

EVE

I hate the city. I want to talk to trees...

RUDY

(getting annoyed)

Okay so if you talk to trees - trees don't talk back mate.

People talk back. If you talk to trees then you're a *mental*.

EVE

But I hate people.

RUDY

(throwing his hands up)

You love people.

EVE

So?!

I don't know how to communicate with most of them and I always feel worse than everyone. At everything.

Is it the bike that's shit? I think this bike is shit.

I can never express what I want to. But I know that anyone else other than me can because they don't even think about such weird things.

RUDY

What?

Yeah but you're weird.

EVE

(same time as Rudy's line)

I'm fine, I think I'm fine...

Urgh, I'm losing my brain and soon - I dunno - I'm just actually going to be stupid. And I hate the city. We're surrounded by people here to compare ourselves to and we're surrounded by walls here and... I dunno... I can't be a free Tarzan girl like...

(CONTINUED)

RUDY

Is this about Donna again?

INT. CONFSSIONAL - MORNING

Most of Eve's face is eaten up by shadow. She wipes her nose.

EVE

It's not just Rudy I feel this way about... I'm envious of Donna, too.

PRIEST(O.S.)

Oh - Donna?

EVE

My best friend.  
I could never be happy for all the wonderful, eccentric things she did. I thought about this and I cannot be happy for other people's happiness. It's called schadenfreude; I found out. I get weirdly satisfied when unfortunate things happen to people I care about and it blocks my relationships with them.

But Donna is very beautiful.

EXT. EXOTIC FOREST

DONNA stands by a waterfall, covered in tribal face paint and hair beads. Donna wipes her nose and moves her lips but the echo-y sounds that come out are not in sync with the lip movement.

DONNA

*Urgh, I always have a cold.*

EVE(V.O)

*She has a posh face and big boobs-  
But that's not what I care about.*

Donna splashes her face with the water and whips her hair back. Then slings a hand-woven bread basket over her shoulder.

EVE(V.O)

*She's had so many life changing adventures.*

(CONTINUED)

Eve takes out a camera and points it at Donna. SNAP.

CUT TO:

INT. SWIMMING POOL - DAY

DONNA is now walking to the swimming pool showers with her towel over her shoulder. EVE walks by her side. The echo is dying away and more realistic sounds take over. They pass a BOY SWIMMER, Donna slaps him on the bum and he frowns.

EVE (V.O)

*She just doesn't care, she has no boundaries. She can do whatever she wants. Everyone loves her..*

DONNA

(laughing and waving back at boy)

Like, we're literally all so dumb. I swear we've all seen each other naked.

EVE

(awkward laughter)

Cool.

Are you coming to my play tomorrow night? It's about talking to trees.

DONNA

Of course, dear.

Oh yeah your fucking mental kinky tree obsession!

EVE

It's not an obsession.

Trees are just so old and wise - Japanese ones especially. Imagine having a conversation with one. Donna, I need to find a spirituality in my life. And I won't find it in people.

DONNA

That's fucked up dear, trees don't talk.

INT. CONFESSIONAL - MORNING

The priest looks at Eve and tries to think hard.

PRIEST

I don't really get it I'm afraid...  
I have to say that in all my years  
as a Priest, I haven't had a  
confession so strange.  
Oh, but I know! Maybe we'll find  
something in the Holy Bible.

He excitedly flicks through the pages of his bible.

EVE

Well, I need to find something;  
some enlightenment.  
That sounds stupid or... I don't  
know but see it only gets worse.

PRIEST

Worse?

INT. STAIRCASE AT FLAT - EARLY EVENING

EVE sits at bottom of the staircase in the same elegant  
attire she has on in the church.

Staring out blankly and playing with a necklace not seen  
before, nervously.

DONNA comes out from the toilet just behind her adjusting  
her large breasts almost popping out a revealing top, and  
walks up to the hallway mirror.

DONNA

Is this too much do you think?

Eve stares in awe at Donna's adjusting of her cleavage.

EVE

No- nope. That's good.

DONNA

Fuck it. It'll have to do.

Donna picks up a purse and Eve gets up from stair.

They take a few steps out the front door before Eve freezes  
on the spot.

(CONTINUED)

EVE

I can't go.

DONNA

Oh! Are you nervous m'dear?

Donna walks back and takes Eve, arm in arm. They keep walking.

EVE

I don't want Rudy to see it.

DONNA

Fuck it Eve! He's your boyfriend  
-he's gonna love it!

Oh fuck- did that bird nearly shit  
on me?! I don't like birds shitting  
on me. NOT A FAN.

EVE

No but he's good at this stuff. I  
hate my play.

DONNA

You don't hate it. You just have a  
bit of a... weird thing.

Eve pulls her arm from Donna's, stopping them again.

EVE

Wait, Donna. Do you think I'm like  
- weird? I mean abnormal? I think I  
have emotional problems.

DONNA

Eve, you probably do.

INT. SMALL THEATRE - EVENING

The play is almost finished as the ACTRESS runs on stage  
naked save from her conveniently placed leaf costume. She  
faces the audience.

EVE glances over to see DONNA sniffing loudly a few seats  
down.

ACTRESS

I hit the wooden panel and it  
answers back to me: yes, yes. No,  
no.

(CONTINUED)

House lights come and applause ascends. Eve looks at RUDY beside her and he laughs.

CUT TO:

INT. SMALL THEATRE - NIGHT

A gathering on the stage of the cast, the crew and audience members, mingling with wine. RUDY looks down at a white cake he's eating.

RUDY  
(to himself)  
Urgh, carbs.

EVE is talking to her main ACTRESS and they hug excitedly before DONNA interrupts by jumping on Eve.

DONNA  
Fucking hell, Eve. You're such a  
freak but I love it.

Rudy approaches. As does ANNA(35) the festival manager, to close the circle.

ANNA  
That was really interesting, Eve.  
Well done.

EVE  
Thanks so much.

ANNA  
Rudy, have the showings for your  
play finished? Because I've not had  
a chance to see it yet and I've  
been hearing *amazing* things about  
it. Just the best reviews!

RUDY  
Yeah I had my last showing just  
before Eve's play tonight...

The voices around her become background noise and Eve tries to play it cool.

*EVE (V.O)*  
*And so... I feel myself getting  
more unhappy with everything being  
said about Rudy and how talented he  
is. I engulf myself then in how  
incredible he is and how much it*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

EVE (V.O) (cont'd)

*makes me sad. In my head I dare him to say something more intelligent, intriguing or funny than he did before, and he does every time. I'm envious of his whole existence.*

*I'm even envious of his massive dick even though I'm not a man.*

INT. CONFSSIONAL - DAY

The PRIEST'S eyes widen and he seems more intrigued.

PRIEST

M... massive? I dunno, that's strange.

EVE

*But then I find myself getting worse, getting consumed by this negative emotion from the inside, paralysed by it. And I'm standing there, growing my roots into the floor, and all I am able to do is just observe and admire all these extra-ordinary people around me and compared to them I'm just ordinary, still and silent, wooden and inexpressive.*

INT. SMALL THEATRE - NIGHT

EVE is leaning on a tree created for the performance at the side of the stage, fiddling with her necklace. Her whole spirit slumped as she watches the crowd.

EVE (V.O)

*I watch Rudy talk to the festival manager and to many others about the genius of his play. I watch Donna get along with my favourite cast member and entertain a circle of people. I smell this guy's fart right before he tells everyone that he's farted and I think how great it would be to be a guy. I catch a glance of this girl playfully hitting her friend in the stomach and think of how I would do it so much worse and probably fall over*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

*EVE (V.O) (cont'd)*  
*or wind him. I am looking at all*  
*these people who seem to find it so*  
*easy to be happy and I can't figure*  
*out what is wrong with me.*

RUDY sits beside Eve watching her face. Eve twists the wooden linked chain of her necklace around her finger.

RUDY  
Hey. Donna's being hilarious. I  
still fucking hate her. Fat.

A few people are going out after,  
do you wanna go?

Eve mumbles something inaudible.

RUDY  
Also love the festival manager.  
Telling everyone how good my show  
went.

Eve's necklace bursts and a hundred beads pour onto the stage. The room turns silent and everyone stares back at Eve. Rudy laughs in the background.

Seemingly millions of beads continue to spill out covering the stage floor.

INT. CONFESSIONAL - DAY

EVE  
So I came here instead. You have to  
help me father, sometimes I think I  
am the deadly sin. I am envy. What  
happens to deadly sins, father?

PRIEST  
I don't know about that but I mean,  
both of your friends care about  
you, yes? And you care about them?  
So there is no problem. I think the  
best thing to do is to be grateful  
to God for bestowing you with such  
gifted friends and just learn from  
them I suppose.

Also, I really think you should  
have a look in the Holy Bible  
because it's- it's just so good.

The PRIESTS raises his shoulders as if it's really simple.

(CONTINUED)

PRIEST (CONT'D)  
And yeah - that's basically it,  
just be happy.

The Priest smiles comfortingly as Eve is trying to catch her breath and is turning pale.

EVE  
I don't want to be envious of  
people anymore.

Silence.

PRIEST  
I'm telling you God has a plan for  
you. And you can come here and pray  
to him and-

EVE  
I can't be with people or God or  
anyone better than me. I need to be  
with myself.

Eve marches out of the confessional panicked and hurt. The Priest stumped. She pauses.

CUT TO

EXT. BUSY TOKYO CROSSROADS - DAY

EVE is passed by many people as she stands at a crossing looking around for somewhere to go, confused.

She hails a cab.

EXT. RURAL JAPANESE PEACE GARDEN - DAY

She's in Japan.

The wheels of Eve's suitcase charge around corners on a narrow path skidding and wiggling.

Eve dumps her suitcase on the ground and looks out at a Japanese garden. Finally. Zen.

She slowly approaches a thick, aged tree. She's alone.

Eve enjoys, as much as she can, a long silence.

She opens her mouth to speak.

(CONTINUED)

EVE

I'm Eve and I have this problem...

Her words become defeated mumbles. She stays still and silent for a while.

Eve is about to leave but she notices a scrunched up energy drink can and a small heap of japanese candy under another tree; a young sapling, only starting to grow.

Maybe she eats the candy from under the tree.

She stares at it thinking of Rudy and the people she loves and how she needs them and just has a bit of growing up to do instead of moving to fucking Japan.

She lifts up her camera. SNAP.

INT. RUDY'S ROOM - NIGHT

RUDY is lying down on his couch listening to loud rap music and staring at the ceiling in somber disbelief. Pizza boxes, plates, food everywhere. He is in a bad way.

A knock on the door. He doesn't flinch.

Another knock. Another.

RUDY

Fuck off, cunts.

After a while of silence a clattering noise as if someone's trying to unlock the door from behind. Finally, the door pushes open slowly.

RUDY

Em, fuck off?

From behind the door, EVE'S apologetic angel face appears. Then she awkwardly enters with her suitcase and closes the door behind her.

They remain as they are. Rudy piercing Eve with his eyes, completely serious. Eve blinks a lot and bites her lips, trying to do something with her face.

Rudy turns the rap music off. He gets up off the couch and runs his hands through his hair. He walks towards her.

RUDY

Japan?

Eve tries not to cry.

(CONTINUED)

EVE

I fucking hate trees.

Rudy taps his lips. Eve takes a few small steps forward to kiss him.

Rudy shoves her onto the bed behind her.

RUDY

You love trees!

Eve lets out a loud laugh from behind her sorrow.

Slowly he climbs on top of her and begins to unbutton his trousers, the pair stare intensely staring at each other, smiling.

A bang on the door. Interrupting.

DONNA

Rudy you ate all my fucking carbs!  
What's wrong with you?!

FADE TO BLACK

RUDY

*I fuckin' hate Donna.*