

WABI SABI

Written by

Jacques Manjarrez

SCENE 1.1 INT. APARTMENT BATHROOM - NIGHT

Dim lighting. The bathroom is dirty, decrepid. EB sits neck-deep in a bubble bath. He is sporting a black eye-patch on his right eye. He is surrounded by scented candles. He solemnly listens to lo-fi while the faint sound of drilling and screaming can be heard just beyond paper-thin walls. His expression is stoic, pensive - his eyes focussed forward at the blank wall.

Suddenly, DOC bursts in. He wears a white apron riddled with red splashes. Without sparing EB a glance, he rushes to the medicine cabinet just above the sink and grabs every antibiotic and roll of medical tape he can carry. He then runs out, slamming the door behind him. EB continues to stare forward throughout.

SCENE 1.2 INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM

DOC sprints from the bathroom into his home operating room.

DOC

Oh shit oh fuck oh shit oh fuck oh -

He opens the door and becomes panicked upon seeing at what lies silent inside. The faint, continuous buzzing.

DOC (CONT'D)

Oh fuck.

SCENE 1.3 INT. APARTMENT BATHROOM - MEANWHILE

EB still in the bath. He tilts his head to face the portrait of KANE, propped up on a nearby stool. He sighs.

SCENE 1.4 - 1.5

What follows is a series of simultaneous shots one after another depicting EB staring at the portrait melancholically, EB imagining him and KANE romantically running through the fields together, and DOC attempting to resuscitate his patient and then performing gruesome surgery on them.

SCENE 1.6 INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - SOON AFTER

An exhausted DOC scribbles on a note pad while standing next to LAMMERGEIER, whose face is concealed under several layers of medical tape. DOC writes a note and hands it to him.

LAMMERGIER

This just says whey.

DOC

Yeah, I can't legally prescribe anything - but, you know, can't hurt.

LAMMERGIER

Okay. Uh, so hey Doc, do I - do I really look like Ed Sheeran?

DOC

I can't change who you are under these wraps, Lam. You want to be a multiple Grammy award winning artist? That takes guts.

LAMMERGIER

Yeah.

DOC

And balls.

LAMMERGIER

Right.

DOC

But you ask me: 'Doc, do I really look like the ginger that makes women quiver?' My friend, you are his spitting image.

LAMMERGIER

Wow. Susie is going to love this! Thanks so much, doc!

DOC leads LAMMERGIER out the front door.

DOC

Don't mention it.

The door closes. DOC pauses momentarily.

SCENE 1.7 INT. APARTMENT BATHROOM

EB continues to sit solemnly in the bathtub, staring at the portrait. The door swings open. Enter DOC with a suitcase and backpack, looking as though we just packed in a rush. He looks anxious. He faces EB in the bath.

DOC

I'm, uh, imma head out for a bit. So just, you know, hold down the fort if that's chill.

(MORE)

DOC (CONT'D)

Oh, and how about when I get back, we talk about ditching the eye patch? You look like you just came back from a seven-year old's birthday party. (beat) And not as a seven year old. (beat) You look like a pedophile. No offense.

DOC slams the door. The portrait of KANE falls over. EB sighs.

SCENE 2.1 INT. SUSIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

SUSIE faces LAMMERGIER across a dinner table where a romantic dinner has been prepared for the two of them. SUSIE looks on in quiet shock, horror, and rage while tightly grasping a spoon. LAMMERGIER's face looks like a fucking flounder.

LAMMERGIER

Happy birthday!

SUSIE's gaze unwavering, she bends the spoon in her hand.

SCENE 3.1 EXT. SUBURB STREET - NIGHT

DOC rolls his suitcase down the empty city street at night with a kind of urgency. He stops by a bench for a dimly-lit bus station. Sitting next to him is KANE. She glances up at him.

KANE

Want to buy some Xanax?

DOC

I'm good.

KANE

You're the plastic surgeon, right?

DOC

You don't look like a former patient of mine.

KANE

Is that an insult or a compliment?

DOC

Depends. Do you like flounders?

SCENE 4.1 EXT. IN FRONT OF APARTMENT - MEANWHILE

SUSIE parks the car outside of DOC's apartment. She begins to unbuckle her seat belt and get out with a constant stoic expression. LAMMERGIER sits idly in shotgun. He tries to keep cool. He still looks like fucking flounder.

LAMMERGIER

I'm just going to talk to him, all right? I'll go up and calmly express our dissatisfaction with his service through constructive criticism.

SUSIE gets out of the driver's side and walks to the back of the car, and begins looking through the trunk.

LAMMERGIER (CONT'D)

Inquire as to whether or not he has any kind of return policy. Like, maybe we qualify for a customer rewards program or something.

SUSIE grabs a machete from the trunk and begins walking towards the apartment. LAMMERGIER sits idly in the car. SUSIE turns on the AC through Lammergier's side.

LAMMERGIER (CONT'D)

Maybe a gift certificate.

SCENE 4.1 INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM

EB looks at himself in a face mirror, gently caressing his eye patch. He is in a bathrobe. He stares longingly at the portrait of KANE next to him. He sighs.

SCENE 4.2 INT. STAIRS TO APARTMENT - MEANWHILE

SUSIE makes her way slowly up the stairs to LAMMERGIER's and DOC's apartment, carrying her machete. A slight creak in the floorboards as she walks.

SCENE 4.3 INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM

EB, hearing this, looks towards the door.

SCENE 4.4 INT. STAIRS TO APARTMENT

SUSIE approaches the front door. A sign on it reads: "Better Self Cosmetic Surgery, Doc Keller, M.D.*".

SCENE 4.5 INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM

SUSIE kicks the door open. She surveys the room. The apartment is dark save the light emanating from a few incense candles. There is a deafening silence.

SCENE 4.6 EXT. IN FRONT OF APARTMENT - MEANWHILE

LAMMERGIER continues to sit idly in the car. He still looks like a fucking flounder. He softly sings an Ed Sheeran song to himself.

POV of a figure approaching the car, just out of LAMMERGIER's line of sight. The figure taps the side window. He looks, nothing. He looks forward. He sees a man in a party fish mask on the hood of the car. He tries to scream "Susie!" but is cut off.

SCENE 4.7 INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM

SUSIE looks through the apartment for any sign of DOC. He is nowhere to be found. As she cautiously makes her way through the hallway, EB holds his breath from between the coats inside a dark closet.

SUSIE moves her way into an adjacent bed room, where she looks around the corners and in the closets. As she makes her way closer to EB, EB becomes visibly panicked.

Finally, SUSIE flings open a closet to reveal EB standing absolutely still between some coats. She closes it as if she didn't see anything. She sighs and dials a number on her phone.

SUSIE

(on call)

Hey. I need you to find me the surgeon. No, he's not here. Just some pervert with an eye patch, looking like the only thing he's going to pirate is probably Space Jam for the scenes with Lola Bunny's feet. What? No, I haven't thought about this, why do you ask? I'm perfectly comfortable with my sexuality. Just let me know when you find him. Yes, trust me, you'd be the first to know.

SUSIE hangs up. She makes her way out of the apartment. EB audibly chokes back tears from inside the closet.

SCENE 4.8 EXT. IN FRONT OF APARTMENT

SUSIE makes her way back to the car, only to find EB missing from shotgun. She looks up and down the street. No sign of him anywhere. She sighs, exasperated.

SCENE 5.1 INT. GOTHIC-CHURCH LOOKING COMPLEX - MEANWHILE

A dimly-lit abandoned chapel. LAMMERGIER sits in a make-shift throne facing the congregation, shivering with fear. Sitting in the otherwise empty rows of chairs are a handful of people silently facing forward, donning comical fish masks. The congregation makes fish faces with their mouths.

LAMMERGIER looks around the room, terrified. SCENE 6.1 INT. KANE'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT NIGHT

Dark lit hovel of KANE's apartment. KANE opens the door with a shove, letting in DOC, who maneuvers into the apartment with his luggage.

KANE
Mind the Xanax.

KANE takes DOC on a short apartment tour, jump-cutting between the various rooms.

KANE (CONT'D)
Here's the guest room, the bathroom, living room, kitchen, second bathroom with a shower, boiler room, darkroom, laundry room, backyard, front yard, and vibe room. Feeling it?

DOC
Uh huh. Great. Hey, are you sure about this?

KANE
Sure about what?

DOC
I mean your very kind for offering me a place to stay - I'm just trying to figure out why, given that we just met and it's obvious I'm trying to run away from something that seeks to harm me and might harm you by association.

KANE
You sound suspicious.

DOC
Yeah, I mean... I am.

Suddenly a moment of realization overcomes DOC.

DOC (CONT'D)
Oh... I get it. I get it. You're
fucking clever. You want some work
done.
What were you expecting? Show some
kindness to the poor plastic
surgeon, get some Botox? What do
you want, some body work?
Definitely could do some work
there. Little nip tuck? Wittle
little nip tuck? Just shameful.

DOC, eyes kept condescendingly on KANE, makes his way into an adjacent room.

KANE
Not that one - that's my...

DOC's eyes widen. He drops his luggage. The room is decorated head-to-toe with pictures of EB. Framed photographs, posters, bodypillows - all taken from a voyeur's perspective.

DOC
Holy shit.

He glances at KANE. KANE looks panicked.

DOC (CONT'D)
What's his appeal?

KANE
... The eye patch?

DOC
The eye patch.

KANE
I think it's cool. It's mysterious.
Like, what's he hiding under there,
you know?

DOC
A cataract.

Beat.

DOC (CONT'D)

Here I was thinking that you were helping me because you wanted a free surgery. No. You were just using me to meet my roommate.

Beat.

KANE

Think you could introduce us?

Beat.

DOC

No.

KANE

Why not?

DOC

I'm a cosmetic surgeon.

KANE

So?

DOC

So if Eb being Eb with his absurd eye-patch can have an obsessed stalker, then what is my purpose?

KANE

You seem to be obsessed with these objective standards of beauty.

DOC

It's - my - profession! I know what looks nice. This isn't nice! It's stupid. It's weird. It's asymmetrical. It's fucking creepy.

KANE

I just need to know if my feelings are reciprocated. That's all. I haven't found the right opportunity to ask, but if I could just know for sure...

DOC

Oh, for God's sake -

Furious knocking at the door. KANE and DOC look over in terror. KANE shoves DOC into her room, and approaches the door.

DOC, in KANE's room, gets stared down by an EB body pillow. DOC looks mildly uncomfortable.

KANE grabs a large, blunt object on her way to the door. Her breaths are steady, measured. She reaches for the doorknob. With one swift inhale, she swings the door open, to reveal a quivering LAMMERGIER.

LAMMERGIER

Hi - I'm sorry, I don't want to trouble you, but I'm being chased by Fish Cultists that want to turn me into their fish messiah and I was wondering if perhaps you had a place I could lay low for tonight?

KANE

Are they cultists that worship fish or they fish that belong to a cult?

LAMMERGIER

... I don't know.

KANE

Sounds like you need some Xanax.

Behind KANE, DOC peaks his head from behind the door to KANE's room. DOC and LAMMERGIER exchange glances over KANE's shoulder.

LAMMERGIER

Doc!

DOC

Oh fuck.

DOC slams the door. LAMMERGIER squeezes past KANE.

LAMMERGIER

Excuse me -

She closes the door. LAMMERGIER runs to DOC's room and begins furiously pounding on the door, trying the door knob.

LAMMERGIER (CONT'D)

Doc! Doc, please! You've got to help me! It's my fault for thinking Susie was an Ed Sheeran fan. I would really appreciate it if you could help turn me back to my old face without, and I cannot stress this enough, any offense intended.

No response.

LAMMERFIER

Fix my face, you apocalyptic fuck-wit! Sorry. I'm sorry.

DOC

I can't make it as good as it was. Whatever I do, you'll still look like a flounder.

KANE

Flounder's are nice. There's no shame in being a flounder.

LAMMERGIER

What?

DOC

Don't listen to her, she has a cyclops fetish!

KANE

Your girlfriend - If I had to guess - isn't mad because you're a flounder. She's mad because you think she won't love you in spite of that... Maybe, I don't know.

Beat.

DOC

(from behind door)
Susie's not with you?

LAMMERGIER

Thankfully no.

DOC opens the door. He looks LAMMERGIER sternly in the eye.

DOC

I have an idea.

DOC smashes a portrait of EB over LAMMERGIER's head. LAMMERGIER collapses, unconscious.

DOC (CONT'D)

(to Kane)
I need to see your kitchen.

SCENE 6.2 INT. KANE'S APARMENT

Montage of DOC gathering various surgical tools from Kane's apartment.

SCENE 6.3 EXT. KANE'S APARMENT - LATER THAT NIGHT

SUSIE stands intimidatingly outside KANE's apartment, machete by her side.

SCENE 6.4 INT. KANE'S APARMENT

SUSIE kicks down the door to KANE's apartment. She looks to the corner to see a wide-eyed KANE, who without hesitation points to an adjacent bathroom door.

SCENE 6.5 INT. KANE'S BATHROOM

SUSIE kicks down the door to KANE's bathroom to reveal DOC, more bloodied than before, washing his hands.

DOC

Is that just how you open doors?

He is forcefully thrown out into the living room. DOC screams. A surgical knife has embedded itself in DOC's eye. He slowly pulls it out with great pain. He points the blade at SUSIE, while grasping his own eye that's spewing blood.

LAMMERGIER

Susie!

Everything is still. A flounder flops into the room.

SUSIE

Lammy? Is that you?

LAMMERGIER (FLOUNDER)

I'm sorry, Susie. I should have never doubted your love. Can you ever forgive me?

SUSIE

Oh, Lammy -

SUSIE grabs LAMMERGIER (flounder) from the ground and kisses him deeply. All the while, KANE and DOC stare in amazement and curiosity and disgust.

SUSIE (CONT'D)

Who did this to you?

LAMMERGIER (FLOUNDER)

I did it to myself, Susie. Do you like it?

SUSIE
I couldn't care less.

They embrace.

LAMMERGIER (FLOUNDER)
Could I have some water?

SUSIE
Are you thirsty?

LAMMERGIER (FLOUNDER)
I am going to die, Susie.

SCENE 7.1 EXT. STREETS - LATER THAT SAME NIGHT

KANE and DOC walk side by side later in the night down the deserted urban street. DOC leans against KANE as he holds a towel to his face.

DOC
Think he'll lend me his eye patch?

KANE
Eh, It wouldn't suit you.

DOC
There's other reasons to wear an eye patch.

Beat.

DOC (CONT'D)
Here, I can walk myself.

He begins walking without support.

KANE
Are you sure?

DOC
My legs work fine.

Beat.

DOC (CONT'D)
So what? You want me introduce you?

KANE
Would you really?

DOC

If someone can love a flounder that deeply, maybe there is some hidden appeal in Eb. Some deeply, deeply hidden, shadowy appeal. Plus, I'm sure he'd appreciate a positive comment for once in his life.

A car speeds in from off screen and smashes into KANE, who goes flying. DOC stops in his tracks, expression shocked. He glances behind him, then turns forward, aghast.

SCENE 8.1 INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM

EB is up against the wall of boxes, reading a Magazine. The door knob jiggles. DOC enters, face frozen in the same expression as when he saw the incident unfold. He glances up at EB. EB is not wearing an eye patch.

EB

What happened to you?

DOC nods and heads to his room, slowly closing the door behind him. EB gets back to his magazine. Close up on EB's eye patch in the trash.

End.