

The Watchers

by  
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EXT. ROADWAY - DAY

Two identical Angels ELIJAH and GAZARDIEL stand on the side of an empty highway at a bus stop looking upon a vast field of wilted sunflowers. All of the sunflowers' heads are facing in the same direction, away from the sun. Snow covers the ground and the mountain backdrop is also white with snow.

Eli and Gaz appear to be average twins, with nothing signifying visibly that they are Angels.

ELI  
Will you look at that.

GAZ  
What?

ELI  
The sunflowers.

GAZ  
What about them?

ELI  
They're all dead.

Eli walks across the road and nears the sunflower patch.

GAZ  
(calling after Eli)  
It's winter.

Gaz crosses the street and joins Eli.

ELI  
Yes, I know, but look at them.  
Isn't that extraordinary? Their  
heads are all pointed in the same  
direction...

Eli bends down to examine one of the sunflowers. He looks up toward the sun and pauses.

ELI (CONT'D)  
...Away from the sun. Isn't that  
beautiful?

GAZ  
(sarcastic)  
I'll never understand the things  
you find beautiful.

ELI  
 (chuckling)  
 Oh, come on. This is truly  
 astonishing. Have you ever seen  
 anything so sad in all your life?

GAZ  
 As a matter of fact I have.

ELI  
 Look how their peddles close in  
 like fingers. Their  
 necks...twisted, almost sacrificed.  
 (pause) It's as if they were  
 ashamed to die.

GAZ  
 (coldly and indifferent)  
 They should have been ashamed. What  
 purpose did they serve?

ELI  
 Beauty, Gaz. You of all creatures  
 should understand that.

GAZ  
 A waste if you ask me. They spent  
 all their short, pointless lives at  
 the mercy of the sun with no  
 greater understanding of anything.

Eli gets to his feet, brushes the snow from his hands.

ELI  
 (coyly)  
 We're not talking about sunflowers  
 anymore, are we?

A YOUNG WOMAN then appears on the other side of the road and  
 stands at the bus stop. Eli and Gaz look at her.

GAZ  
 What would you say to a little  
 wager?

ELI  
 On?

GAZ  
 I bet you that girl over there  
 won't even notice your precious  
 sunflowers. I bet she'll ignore  
 them completely.

ELI  
And what will that prove?

GAZ  
That no one appreciates the beauty  
that's been given to them. Maybe  
that will convince you of why we're  
here to begin with.

ELI  
I don't think so.

GAZ  
Why not? Worried I'll win?

ELI  
No. I know you'll win.

A BUS pulls up across the road. The Young Woman enters the bus. Eli and Gaz hurry to the side of the road and enter the bus as well. The BUS DRIVER nods to the Young Woman as she slips a coin into the a slot beside the driver's seat.

The Bus Driver looks straight forward as Eli and Gaz board without paying.

Few people are scattered on the bus. A MIDDLE AGED MAN, an ELDERLY MAN, an ELDERLY WOMAN, and the Young Woman.

Eli is in high spirits. He animatedly looks out of the window as the bus begins its motion. Eli watches as the sunflower patch disappears. His eyes follow it for a moment.

GAZ  
What are you so pleased about? If  
you think you're going to find one,  
I'll tell you now, you're going to  
be disappointed.

ELI  
And what makes you so sure?

GAZ  
This is Perditus we're talking  
about. The city even time's  
forgotten. There's nothing there  
except the miscreants other  
respectable cities wouldn't  
tolerate. They've got nothing, just  
the stolen scraps from surrounding  
metropolises and a train that has  
too much sense to stop.

ELI

(clever)

Ah, but according to your philosophy, there are no respectable cities given their inhabitance.

GAZ

A city is a much easier thing to respect than the creatures within it. (short pause) And I'm not sure you can call it a philosophy when there's no subjectivity involved. Human beings are a lost cause. You know you're wasting everyone's time with this little quest of yours.

ELI

Oh, I don't think *He* believes it's a waste of time.

GAZ

Of course *He* does. *He* knows all the answers before we think of the questions. *He's* just humoring you.

ELI

You don't know that for certain.

GAZ

And you don't know *He* isn't.

Eli doesn't respond. His eyes are discontented. There is an awkward moment of silence.

GAZ (CONT'D)

What do you expect to find here?

ELI

I haven't the slightest idea, but I think we should just make sure this place is as damned as you claim it to be. If you want to know the truth, I don't believe it and the least we could do is be thorough, we owe the poor creatures that much.

GAZ

*He's* given them every chance, and each time they've failed *Him*. *He's* given them great gifts... individuality, which is more than you can say for us.

(MORE)

GAZ (CONT'D)

(pause) Listen, I'll give you that I'm not too fond of *them* in general, but this place in particular is deserving of a little wrath. It's full of nothing but liars, cheats, deviants and murderers. I promise you, no one will miss it.

Gaz looks around at the people on the bus.

GAZ (CONT'D)

And I'll prove it to you.

ELI

How's that?

GAZ

By showing you things you won't allow yourself to see, precious Eli.

Gaz gets to his feet and walks to the Elderly Man sitting by himself, pressed against the side of the bus, looking out the window.

GAZ (CONT'D)

Take this man for example. He's on his way to see his mistress...

INT. APARTMENT BATHROOM - MORNING

The Elderly Man is tying his tie in the mirror. Gaz and Eli stand behind him. The Elderly Man is completely unaware of their presence.

GAZ

(to Eli)

He's been married to the same man for 50 years. They renewed their vows last October.

INT. APARTMENT KITCHEN - MORNING

Gaz and Eli follow the Elderly Man into the Kitchen where the Elderly Man's HUSBAND stands over the stove.

HUSBAND

So early to work?

ELDERLY MAN

Yep. They needed me to come in early all week.

GAZ

(to Eli)

That's a lie. His mistress, a young woman who lives across town has been threatening to out their relationship if he didn't promise to stop and see her on his way to work every morning.

The Elderly Man and his Husband kiss.

HUSBAND

I love you.

ELDERLY MAN

I love you too.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - MORNING

The Elderly Man steps into the Hallway and closes the door. His face is distraught and saddened. He wipes shallow tears from his cheeks and then the sweat from his brow.

Gaz and Eli are beside him in the hallway. Gaz is leaning his shoulder against the hallway wall.

GAZ

He's wracked with guilt, but he can't bring himself to end either relationship out of cowardice and the fear that he'll end up alone.

The Elderly Man composes himself and walks down the hallway.

INT. BUS - DAY

Gaz walks over to the Elderly Woman.

GAZ

(to Eli)

And her. Look at her. A pathetic sight. She plots to kill her husband.

INT. APARTMENT KITCHEN - NIGHT

The Elderly Woman stands over a giant boiling pot of soup. She secretively looks around. Her HUSBAND is facing the TELEVISION. The picture on the television is fuzzy. The Husband bangs on the television with his hand.

The Elderly Woman unscrews an unmarked spice dispenser and pours a substance into the soup.

Gaz dips his finger into the soup and licks it. He makes a face as if the soup doesn't taste awful.

ELI

Why is she doing this?

GAZ

Because she's recently realized she doesn't love him and that perhaps she never has. They were married when she was sixteen. She is now seventy-six, not including the age reduction surgery she underwent four Christmases ago. It's amazing what these surgeons can do. They actually turn back your internal clock.

ELI

Will it hurt?

GAZ

Not really, it's an outpatient procedure.

ELI

No, the poison in his soup.

GAZ

Oh. Yes, terribly.

The Elderly Woman places a SOUP BOWL in front of her Husband.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Bon appétit.

INT. BUS - DAY

Gaz approaches the Middle-Aged Man. The Middle-Aged Man reaches into his hair and uses the grease on his fingers to seal a hand-rolled cigarette.

GAZ

And this vicious scoundrel. He mercilessly beats and tortures a horse that's too old to race.

INT. BARN - NIGHT

Gaz and Eli watch as the Middle-Aged Man laughs maniacally while whipping the a HORSE again and again.

ELI

(overwhelmed with sadness)  
Why does he do this?

GAZ

Boredom.

ELI

Boredom? That's impossible. No one would do this because they were bored.

GAZ

(condescendingly)  
Oh, sweet Angel of Innocence  
Elijah. Your task has shielded you  
from what the world truly is.  
(pause) This city is the sum of all  
the tyranny this existence has to  
offer. You see now, it must be  
destroyed.

A thick droplet of blood slowly drips down the horse's leg.

INT. BUS - DAY

The Middle-Aged Man sits slouched in his bus seat.

Gaz and Eli sit on the bus beside one another. Eli looks defeated, sad.

GAZ

(to Eli)  
So you understand why I call your  
quest silly. Your journey to find  
one innocent soul in this place was  
over before it began.

Long pause.

ELI

But we must try.

GAZ

Try all you like. The ending will  
be the same.

INT. BUS - DAY

The bus pulls up and noisily decompresses. Everyone gets off the bus, Eli and Gaz lastly.

The city is busy, crowded with loud, strange and disheveled people.

There is a small crowd formed off to the side. Eli and Gaz walk toward it.

At the center of the crowd is a STREET PERFORMER with a giant net.

In the crowd are various couples, some men with men, some women with women and some men with woman.

In the front, closest to the Street Performer is a FAT MAN in a pinstripe suit and hat. Large gold rings are prominent on his fingers, and he's holding the hands of a BLONDE MAN on one side and a BRUNETTE WOMAN on the other side. His large, sweaty hands cling to the man and woman's hands uncomfortably. The Fat Man towers over them in height.

The Street Performer dips the net into a bubble solution, which is poured into a tarp on the ground. He lifts the net up swiftly, creating many bubbles, which the children in the crowd begin to play under, running and making sounds of joy.

The children are shown mystified by the bubbles. The bubbles slowly fall to the earth, popping on impact.

Eli and Gaz watch on. Eli has a hint of optimism and mystification in his eyes.

ELI

(to Gaz)

How about those ones, Gaz? They're just children. Everyone you showed me was already crippled by age and bitterness. Of course bitter people will do terrible things. They've felt they've been cheated. But a child, they have no reason to purposefully do wrong.

GAZ

Perhaps that was true at one time.  
But in this place even the children  
are guilty. Look.

Gaz points toward the crowd.

While everyone is distracted by the Street Performer a LITTLE BOY and LITTLE GIRL are stealing their wallets undetected.

The Little Boy see's the Fat Man's golden rings. He looks up at the Fat Man with nervous eyes. The Fat Man's hands are still locked with his companions, making it impossible for the Little Boy to steal the gold rings.

Eli watches as the Little Boy and Little Girl run away from the crowd and approach a SEEDY MAN standing near an alley way, who is their father.

Eli walks closer to the Seedy Man and listens to their conversation.

SEEDY MAN

(to Little Boy)

Did you get their wallets.

LITTLE BOY

Yes, dad.

The Little Boy and the Little Girl unload their loot into a trash bag their father is holding open.

SEEDY MAN

How about the rings? Did you get  
the gold rings.

LITTLE BOY

I couldn't. His hands were--

The Seedy Man interrupts the boy by smacking him across the face.

SEEDY MAN

(angrily)

You little shit! I told you to get  
the rings!

Gaz gets Eli's attention.

GAZ

(to Eli)

Eli!

Eli's spell from watching the boy is broken and he looks at Gaz wide-eyed.

GAZ (CONT'D)  
Shall we?

ELI  
(still collecting himself)  
Yes, yes.

Gaz breaths deeply and closes his eyes.

Time freezes. Everyone stands completely still and a deadly silence begins.

Gaz opens his eyes.

GAZ  
That's better.

Various people are shown frozen in movement.

The Street Performer's bubbles are frozen in mid air.

Eli begins to move through the frozen people. He passes two women locked in a passionate kiss.

GAZ (CONT'D)  
Now get to it.

Gaz takes a POCKET WATCH from his jacket and looks at the time.

ELI  
Well, first thing's first.

Eli walks over to the Seedy Man and proceeds to undo his belt and unbutton his trousers.

Eli smiles and walks back in the street.

He begins slowly walking through the frozen people, looking intently at their faces.

GAZ  
(sarcastically)  
Well, haven't you found one yet?

ELI  
It's not that simple.

GAZ  
Just look into their eyes and see their inner innocence.

ELI

It doesn't work like that. I can only sense a vague reading of who they are and what they've done, but it's not perfect.

Eli continues to pass various faces.

He suddenly spots a face through a crowd of people.

The face belongs to a handsome, BLONDE YOUNG MAN, between the ages of 18 and 20 years old. His face is frozen in a smile.

Eli is taken aback by the sight of the blonde young man. He stops dead in his tracks and stares at him. Tears fill his eyes.

GAZ

We haven't much longer, Eli.

Eli continues to stare.

GAZ (CONT'D)

Eli!

Eli looks at Gaz, wipes the tears from his eyes casually.

GAZ (CONT'D)

Found something?

Eli hesitates.

ELI

No.

GAZ

That's okay. We're try again tomorrow.

Gaz glances at his pocket watch again.

The second hand passes the twelve.

Everyone becomes unfrozen and normal movement resumes.

The handsome blond man becomes lost in the crowd.

Eli beings feverishly looking for him.

ELI

(to Gaz, frantic)

I'm going to look around some more.  
I'll meet you back here tonight?

GAZ  
(suspecting)  
Fine.

Eli takes off quickly into the crowd.

GAZ (CONT'D)  
(calling after Eli)  
Don't touch anything!