

PAM SCOTT

Valentine, Rewritten.

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Chapter 1

An old cemetery. Faded flowers. Tall, bare trees.

Valentine, a young man in his early twenties, tall, with long dark hair, pale skin, and cold features, stands before a gravestone.

In his hand, a bottle of liquor. He stares in silence.

Valentine unlocks his apartment door. A small, dimly lit place.

His mother, a woman in her late forties, lies asleep. He stands there for a moment, watching her with quiet sadness. Then, he lays down on the couch and drifts into sleep.

The black night fades into a soft blue. Valentine makes breakfast, leaving it untouched on the table before heading out.

The early morning is silent, except for the distant chirping of birds leaving their nests.

A secluded location. Valentine arrives at a massive, worn-down garage.

He knocks. "It's me."

Inside, the space is dark and empty. A man appears—Max. He

looks frail, his face sickly pale. His presence is heavy, almost menacing, yet weakened by something unseen.

Without speaking, Max nods. Valentine nods back. He pulls out an envelope of cash, placing it on the table. In exchange, he picks up a bag of weed.

Max suddenly coughs—a deep, unsettling sound that echoes in the hollow garage. Valentine stiffens, uneasy. He knows what this means. He grabs a glass of water, setting it in front of Max. Then, he notices the blood on Max’s hand. His eyes darken with quiet concern. Without a word, he leaves.

Campus. Students move in waves, heading to their classes. Valentine stands outside, sharp eyes watching the entrance.

A guy approaches—Husky. Ordinary-looking, same age as Valentine. They walk together.

Inside Husky’s dorm, the room is messy. Valentine sits down, calmly rolling a cigarette. Husky lights one, taking a deep drag.

“Damn, this is good,” Husky mutters, exhaling smoke.

Then, after a pause “Where were you last night?”

Valentine, still focused on rolling, replies, “Had some things to do.”

A knock on the door. A guy steps in—Eddie. Same age, dressed like a rapper. He greets Husky, then closes the door. Pulling out some cash, he hands it to Valentine. “Fifty.”

Valentine, silent, packs the rolled cigarettes into a bag and hands it over. Eddie leaves.

As Valentine stands to go, Husky speaks up. “You taking the exam?”

“Not sure,” Valentine says.

He picks up a book, tapping it against his palm, then gestures toward Husky. Husky nods slightly, his expression clouded with

concern.

The campus is packed. Valentine, about to leave, spots Delilah from a distance. A beautiful girl, radiating a sense of calm and safety, surrounded by friends. She turns, catching sight of him in the crowd. Her face changes slightly—she’s seen this before. Before she can react, Valentine disappears into the sea of students.

A lumber mill deep in the woods. Valentine chops wood, splitting the logs into small pieces. Sweat drips down his face, his body tense with effort. The sky turns golden as the sun sets.

Valentine returns home, carrying bags of groceries.

His mother is awake, watching TV. “Where were you last night?”

He sets the bags in the kitchen. “Had some things to do.”

She watches him closely, her thin, pale face lined with worry as he puts the groceries away. “How was work today?”

“Tiring.”

Night falls. Silence fills the apartment. His mother sleeps. Valentine stands by the door, watching her with a cold, sorrowful gaze. Then, he turns, shuts the door, and leaves.

The sound of crickets and distant barking reaches the cemetery. Valentine walks slowly, arriving at the same grave, holding the same bottle.

He drowns in his thoughts, and the silence becomes deafening. The sound of digging cuts through it. He turns to see a man

digging a grave among the tombstones.

“Maybe you should dig one for me next to his,” Valentine says.

Without stopping, the man replies, “Believe me, most of the time, we dig our own graves.”

Valentine is affected by his words. The man pauses for a moment, turning to him. Same cold features, same piercing gaze. “It’s too early for your grave.”

The man’s eyes shift to the bottle in Valentine’s hand.

Valentine looks at it too, then smiles faintly.

“This bottle... it’s the last thing he touched before he left forever.” His face is lost in memories.

A home, years ago. Valentine, ten years old, stands frozen in terror.

Sunlight fills the living room. A shadow sways gently.

His father, Joseph, in his forties, hangs from the ceiling. It looks like he hanged himself. The same bottle sits on the table, as if it was the last thing he drank from. His face is hidden.

little Valentine stands still, his body trembling, his pants soaked.

His eyes fall on the bottle. Slowly, with hesitant steps, he moves toward the table. Next to the bottle, a black notebook.

Now, in the present, Valentine stares at the bottle with the same expression, the same feeling.

The man speaks again. “What brings you here this time, kid?”

“I’m still there... in that day.”

Before the morning sun fully paints the sky blue, Valentine enters Max’s garage. Max smokes while counting money. Valentine places cash on the table. Max looks up, watching as

Valentine carefully weighs the weed before packing it.

“You...” Max mutters.

Valentine looks at him.

“You need sleep, kid.”

“Yeah.”

“And you need to find something else soon.”

They exchange a silent glance. A farewell without words.

Valentine leaves. Max watches him go, worry settling in his expression.

Morning. Valentine arrives at the university. Everyone greets him. In scattered shots, he discreetly sells to different students.

Inside Husky’s dorm.

“Hey.”

“Hey,” Valentine replies. He pulls out Husky’s book.

“This fast?” Husky looks surprised.

Valentine rolls a cigarette and hands it to him.

“This stuff is special, man.” Husky starts smoking. “You know, I’ve never seen you smoke. What’s up?”

Valentine lies back, staring at the ceiling. “I made a promise.”

Right after the funeral. Everyone had left. Above his father’s grave, his mother held little Valentine close, sobbing.

“Please... don’t be like him. Please.”

Young Valentine, overwhelmed, terrified, nods. The same fear lingers in his face.

Now, in the same place, Valentine stands holding the bottle.

“I made a promise... but I don’t think I’ll keep it.”

From the darkness, a voice speaks. “Why not?”

Valentine turns to see the man holding a lantern, its glow cutting through the pitch-black night.

Quietly, Valentine looks back at the gravestone. "I don't think I have it in me."

The sun begins to set. Students leave their classes. Some take the bus, others drive off.

Delilah walks alone to her car. She drives away, passing Valentine without noticing.

A moment later, she sees him in her rearview mirror. He's watching her, his expression relaxed, a small, innocent smile on his lips.

A car horn blares behind her. Snapping out of it, she keeps driving.

Valentine and his mother sit down for dinner.

"How's university?" she asks.

"It's good," he replies.

"You don't have much left. Lately, you haven't seemed okay—you barely sleep. Please, don't mess this up."

Valentine smiles. "Mom, don't worry. I'll keep my promise to you."

The sound of running water fills the quiet room as his mother washes the dishes. Valentine remains seated at the table, his gaze cold, yet his eyes betray the sadness and fear within. He watches her in silence.

Moments later, he stands, walks to the door, and leaves.

In the middle of the darkness, in front of the grave, Valentine

stands there again, holding the same bottle. The man is there too, carrying his lantern.

“My mother believes I’ll become something,” Valentine mutters. “Anything but him. I think I’ll become everything he was.”

The man remains silent, his face expressionless.

Valentine continues, “This time, if I don’t take the exam, I won’t get the scholarship. And I’ll become everything I promised my mother I wouldn’t be.”

Silence lingers in the night. The lantern’s glow reveals the coldness in Valentine’s face—his fear. And it also reveals the man’s stillness, his quiet sympathy.

“Why do you think you can’t do it?” the man finally asks.

Valentine smirks. “And why should I think that I can?”

A pause. Then, as he turns to leave,

the man says, “I think you know the difference between losing and a loser, boy.”

Valentine steps into Max’s garage. After a few steps, he freezes—Max is on the ground.

He rushes toward him. “Max!”

Max is unconscious, his mouth filled with blood.

Valentine shakes him. “Max! Max, wake up!”

Suddenly, Max gasps, coughing violently, struggling for air.

Valentine grabs a glass of water and helps him drink, then pulls out his phone to call an ambulance.

“Don’t,” Max stops him.

“You need a hospital, Max.”

“Get out of here. Never come back. Boy... you don’t belong in this world.”

Valentine stares at him, shaken, trying to process his words.

Darkness surrounds the graveyard. Only one headstone is visible—his father's. A lantern sits beside it.

Valentine stands still, his expression unreadable.

Husky opens the door to his room. Valentine is there.

“I need something.”

Books are scattered everywhere. Valentine, using a flashlight, shines the beam on an old black notebook, the same one.

On one page, in a child's handwriting, are the words: “I wish my father would die.”

Beneath it, written in different handwriting:

“Now you got what you wanted. Don't be like me. Don't be a loser.”

Husky sleeps soundly. Valentine stares at the page, his expression heavy with pain.

Morning light filters through the window. Valentine is getting ready to leave.

Husky stirs awake. “Are you done?”

“There's no time left. The exam starts in thirty minutes.”

“Do you think you're ready?” Husky asks.

Valentine, lacing his shoes, scoffs. “Come on.”

Husky watches him in silence, his eyes innocent and unsure.

Valentine stands, walks to the door. Before stepping out, he pauses.

“It's not about being ready,” he says. “Or being scared, or anything else. It's about who you are.”

Valentine enters his apartment, the light of the setting sun

reflecting off the walls. He sits at the table with his mother for dinner.

Valentine doesn't eat anything, lost in thought. His mother watches him suspiciously. The silence and his distraction are broken by her gentle voice.

"Valentine, are you okay?"

Valentine snaps back to reality.

"You haven't eaten anything. Something is wrong, I know it. I can't recognize you anymore."

His mother's words terrify him. As we slowly move closer, we see the same fear reflected in his eyes.

The place is quiet, the street completely empty. Outside the university, under the shade of a tree, Valentine stands holding an envelope sealed with the university's stamp.

Tension, fear, hesitation—his breathing grows unsteady. He stares at the envelope, overwhelmed by emotions.

He opens the same black notebook and looks at that same page.

Memories flash before his eyes—Delilah looking at him, his mother hugging him when he was little, his father's lifeless body hanging from the ceiling.

These emotions grow stronger and stronger on his face with each passing image.

We stop at one of these memories—Valentine, a thin child barely able to carry his backpack, returning home from school.

The house is dark, gloomy, and cold. A cigarette smolders in an ashtray.

The boy steps inside and finds his father sitting in a chair.

He feels uneasy. He glances at his mother—she looks younger, pale, fragile. Bruises mark her face. She sits, crying, afraid.

Young Valentine is scared.

“Come here, boy,” his father says in a rough voice.

Valentine hesitates, terrified, but steps forward.

“Your teacher said you wrote this.”

Valentine remains frozen, scared like a small kitten.

His father reads from the same black notebook. “I wish my father would die.”

“You know, I always wondered when you’d finally try to stop me from hitting her. But instead of trying, you just sit there like a loser and watch.”

The father turns to the mother. She, too, is frozen in her chair. “I guess he’ll never try.”

Suddenly, the father grabs Valentine. For the first time, we see his face—it’s the same face as the man from the graveyard.

He holds Valentine tightly, hurting him. Valentine is terrified, trembling.

“You know the difference between losing and a loser, boy? A loser has lost and never tried again.”

The father’s grave, he stands in the darkness. There, in the middle of it all, Valentine, his face cold, his gaze firm.

Silence. He places the bottle on his father’s grave and turns to leave.

“I hope I never see you again.”

Valentine enters the apartment. Without hesitation, he embraces his mother.

They sit at the table. For the first time, we see how at ease Valentine is as he eats dinner.

A beautiful morning. The sky is clear, the ground still damp from the rain.

Valentine steps out of the college dean's office. He looks better—no longer worn down by sleepless nights.

Husky is waiting outside, his excitement evident.

“See? I knew you'd do it!” He hugs Valentine. Valentine hugs him back.

Husky adds, “Imagine if you had done this two years ago, man.”

“Yeah,” Valentine replies.

They walk through the university campus, surrounded by students.

Valentine spots Delilah sitting alone.

“Husky, I'll catch up with you in a bit.” They part ways.

Valentine sits down, gazing at Delilah. She turns, catching his eyes.

They smile at each other.

Delilah stands up and walks toward him. Valentine is slightly surprised, but we see a hint of happiness in his expression.

“You... Why do I feel like every time I turn around, our eyes meet?” Delilah teases.

“I don't think it's a coincidence,” Valentine replies with the same energy.

Delilah smiles. “What?! Are you following me?”

“Galileo couldn't stop watching Venus, and I can't stop watching mine.”

Delilah is taken aback by his words. Slowly, she sits down, smiling.

The End.