

BRAIN

Written by

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INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dirty clothes litter the bed.

A bedside table. The lamp is on.

The second on the analog clock TICKS without missing a beat. TICK...TICK. We hear HEAVY BREATHING match it beat for beat.

JOHN GUSTO, 18, is holding a phone up to his ear, BREATHING HEAVILY and staring into his full length mirror. We hear a FEMALE VOICE on the other end. Calm.

FEMALE VOICE

John?...You fucking hear me?

John tries to compose himself. PHONE STATIC RINGS OUT and begins to ECHO in John's ear, carrying through to his mind.

The HEAVY BREATHING continues.

JOHN (V.O.)

A child's conscience is formed by their environment; their notions of good and evil are the result of the moral atmosphere they breathe...It's up to us which one we feed...good or evil.

TITLE: BRAIN

EXT. MUSIC FESTIVAL, STAGE - DAY

A pair of drum sticks ROLL across the toms in rapid succession.

A hand glides down and STRUMS six guitar strings.

The LEAD SINGER grabs the mic and begins BELTING out the lyrics as the music CRANKS UP.

EXT. MUSIC FESTIVAL, GROUNDS - SAME

A music festival in full flight as crazy YOUNG TEENS enjoy the tunes.

Some carry friends on their shoulders, others pose for pictures. There is plenty of booze in plain sight.

Groups are seated on the ground further back, passing a joint around.

POLICE patrol the area.

MALE (V.O.)  
This is the most powerful  
hallucinogen ever.

INT. MUSIC FESTIVAL, TOILET CUBICLE - SAME

FRANK, 17, CHLOE, 17 and John are all huddled around in a circle.

Frank is holding a tiny sealable bag filled with crystals.

FRANK  
DMT. Best part is, it's natural.  
Our brain produces small amounts  
when we dream. It's the reason we  
shift states of consciousness.  
(beat)  
Our bodies produce the highest  
amounts when we're born and when we  
die.

JOHN  
You don't really believe that crap  
do ya?

FRANK  
There's a million articles on  
google, look it up...Anyway, my  
friend Mick took fifty milligrams,  
a bit more than standard.  
(beat)  
He entered another dimension. Says  
he came in contact with an angel  
like figure. Completely changed his  
perspective.

Chloe looks at John with a sneaky smile.

CHLOE  
Could be fun.

JOHN  
Yeah, or we could have a fucked up  
trip and be scarred for life.

FRANK  
Come on man. You got any idea how  
hard this stuff was to get--

JOHN  
I never promised anything.

Frank looks at Chloe frustrated.

She looks at John playfully and begins twirling her hair with her fingers.

Enticed by the promise of sex, John can't resist.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Fine.

FRANK

Yes!

Frank pulls out a lighter and bong from his bag, shoves all the crystals in and begins LIGHTING IT.

JOHN

Are you sure that's not too much?

FRANK

Can you like stop worrying. One hit's probably gonna be around forty milligrams.

JOHN

Probably?

Frank INHALES deeply while still holding the lighter underneath. He passes it Chloe. She TAKES A HIT, then passes it to John. He stares for a while, trying to figure a way out of taking this damn thing. He can't. He succumbs to peer pressure and INHALES.

The smoke runs through his lungs.

INT. JOHN'S MIND

We move up to the inside of his mind, pushing closer toward the pineal gland. It EXPLODES WITH ELECTRICAL ACTIVITY.

NUERONS FIRE FRANTICALLY.

INT. MUSIC FESTIVAL, TOILET CUBICLE - SAME

Chloe, dizzy, holds her stomach.

Frank, already out of it attempts to talk but slurs his speech.

FRANK

(mumbling)

Culuuurr..arrounggd.

Chloe COLLAPSES to the floor.

John looks on in horror, then DROPS. BLACK.

INT. BACK OF AMBULANCE - NIGHT

John opens his eyes. Sees two PARAMEDICS with him. The SIREN is going off. He closes his eyes.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

John opens his eyes. He's in a hospital bed. His parents, BEN and SARAH are talking quietly to a DOCTOR. He closes his eyes.

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - LATER

John opens his eyes. He's laying on his bed. His dad, Ben, is sitting by his side.

BEN  
How you doing son?

JOHN  
What happened?

BEN  
Doctor said it was a bad case of  
Dimethyltryptamine.

JOHN  
Frank and Chloe. Where are they? I  
have to see them.

BEN  
Frank is fine. You can see him  
after you rest a bit.

JOHN  
And Chloe?

BEN  
Son...She um--

JOHN  
She's dead.

A silence fills the air for a moment.

BEN

Try get some rest. Your mother will  
put dinner on.

Ben leaves the room closing the door behind him.

John moves around attempting to get some rest. A slight  
TINGLE in his forehead begins to make him anxious. He tosses  
trying to shake it off. The TINGLE now turns into a PULSE. In  
pain, John reaches for his head with his hand and tries to  
calm himself. The pain grows worse as the PULSATING turns  
into THROBBING.

INT. JOHN'S MIND

Memories FLASH across John's mind at an alarming rate like a  
slideshow on steroids, until we eventually stop on one with  
him and Chloe.

CHLOE

I love you...you know that right?

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - SAME

John's eyes fling open and he sits up to discover...he's not  
alone.

All colour has gone. We're in black and white. The memory has  
come to life.

Chloe and a past version of himself are seated in the corner  
of his bedroom. Chloe and past John continue their conversation  
seemingly unaware.

PAST JOHN

Why'd you make me do it?

John gets up from his bed and slowly walks toward Chloe.

CHLOE

Come on? You've never stolen  
anything before?

PAST JOHN

No!

John approaches Chloe and starts waving his hand in front of  
her face to see if she responds. She doesn't.

CHLOE  
 (manipulative)  
 I know your angry, but it's just  
 been really hard lately--

PAST JOHN  
 I'm well aware of your mum's drug  
 problem.

Chloe cuddles up to past John and caresses his face. Past John tries to resist but she starts kissing him.

John watches the interaction take place in awe, still in shock at what's happening.

KNOCK...KNOCK. John turns his attention to the door.

BEN (O.S.)  
 (through door)  
 John...dinner.

JOHN  
 Coming dad!

John turns back to the conversation but...it's gone. The memory's over. Colour returns.

FRANK (V.O.)  
 So let me get this straight.

INT. CAFE - DAY

Frank and John chatting over a coffee.

FRANK  
 Your telling me that you can bring  
 memories to life?

JOHN  
 I know it sounds--

FRANK  
 Crazy?

JOHN  
 Look. It was real. Chloe was there,  
 I was there--well a 'version' of me  
 I guess.

FRANK  
 So its real. What should we call  
 it...magical realism?

JOHN

I have to find the people who sold  
the drugs to you and Chloe.

FRANK

Ohhh no, no. That's a bad idea.

JOHN

Chloe died Frank. What if someone  
else has these powers?

FRANK

Magical realism?

JOHN

You know what I mean. They may know  
how to reverse it or something--

FRANK

Or they put a bullet in your head.

JOHN

I need the names Frank.

FRANK

This is crazy. You know that right?  
(gives in)  
You can find em on skid row.

Frank slides a piece of paper across the table.

John takes the paper and heads out the door.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(yelling)  
This is a bad idea!

EXT. SKID ROW, APARTMENT BLOCK - LATER

A seedy looking apartment block.

John's at the front door of room 124. He KNOCKS.

CARLOS, 30, OPENS the door. His eyes are bloodshot and he's  
wearing a dirty singlet. Your typical dealer/junkie.

CARLOS

What the fuck you want?

John nervous, tries to muster up some courage.

JOHN

Chloe, my girlfriend. You sold her  
DMT, now she's dead and my head's  
all messed up.

CARLOS

It's a messy business. Lots of  
people die. Ain't my problem.

Carlos goes to close the door and John gets his foot in the  
way.

JOHN

Listen! Your shit fucked me up.

The pain starts to return to John's head.

CARLOS

I just sell the shit man...and  
Chloe, trust me, you should be glad  
she's dead. She was bad news.

JOHN

What are you--

The pain in John's head intensifies. John grabs his head,  
pushes past Carlos and STUMBLES inside.

INT. APARTMENT 124 - SAME

John rushes over and COLLAPSES on the couch.

SAM, 22, another drug dealer stands in the corner on his  
phone.

CARLOS

Hey! If you're not gonna buy  
anything man then get the fuck out.

Memories flash across John's eyes frantically before we stop  
on one that took place in this very apartment.

CARLOS (CONT'D)

Hey! You deaf?

John opens his eyes to discover another memory has come to  
life. Only this time, it's not his. We're in black and white  
again.

Chloe and Carlos are arguing in the middle of the apartment.

CHLOE

Stop being such a pussy and just gimme the shit. You know I'm good for the money.

CARLOS

You owe my boss two grand. You think I'm stupid?

CHLOE

No...but I know your horny.

Chloe grabs Carlos' crutch and they start making out.

John makes his way over to Carlos and Chloe, watching them.

JOHN

(sotto)

That bitch!

Chloe pulls away.

CHLOE

So...What do you say? Can I have the stuff?

CARLOS

You're crazy bitch.

Carlos pulls out the DMT crystals and hands it to Chloe.

JOHN

Why, Chloe...why?

THUD! THUD! A knock on the door.

The memory fades and the colour returns.

Carlos still slightly shocked walks over and OPENS the door.

EXT. APARTMENT 124, FRONT DOOR - SAME

JAMES, 40, a massive bald guy, is holding up a gun to Carlos' forehead.

JAMES

You fucked up.

BANG! BANG!

Carlos hits the floor with a THUD. Dead. James quickly leaves.

INT. APARTMENT 124 - SAME

John in shock THROWS up all over the couch.

Sam walks over to him.

SAM  
Crazy isn't it.

John slowly looks up at Sam.

JOHN  
What are you talking about?

SAM  
The memories...You can bring em to  
life too. I saw the whole thing.

JOHN  
But I couldn't see you. It was just  
Chloe and Carlos.

SAM  
I'll explain. But first, lets go.  
Don't wanna be here when the cops  
show up.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Sam and John are seated amongst rows of books.

JOHN  
Why are we in a library?

SAM  
I like books.  
(beat)  
So let me explain the rules really  
quickly.  
(beat)  
You can bring a memory to life,  
whether it's yours or someone  
else's. They have to be in the room  
though. Number 2: Only the people  
from the memory will be there.  
Anyone else that is in the room  
prior to the memory beginning will  
not be in it..and...that's pretty  
much it.

John thinks it over.

JOHN  
Can I do it at will?

SAM  
At first it's more triggered by  
conflict or sadness. Once you learn  
to control it though, you'll be  
able to do it whenever.

JOHN  
Is there a cure?

SAM  
Don't know. Teresa Munez. She's the  
one who oversees the movement of  
DMT.

JOHN  
What are we waiting for?

EXT. WAREHOUSE, BACK - CONTINUOUS

Multiple trucks and vans are parked out back in front of the  
garage. Workers are dropping off large parcels and taking  
them inside.

GUARDS stand at the front.

Sam and John walk up to the guards.

SAM  
We're here to see Teresa.

The guards look the two up and down. They frisk both of them.

SAM (CONT'D)  
We're clean man.

INT. WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Sam and John walk through the warehouse and up to Teresa's  
office.

SAM  
Remember, be cool and let me do the  
talking. Also, check this out.

INT. TERESA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

TERESA, 38, good looking, is seated at her desk.

BASH! The door swings open quickly.

Sam and John burst in.

SAM  
Freeze! LAPD!...I've always wanted  
to say that.

Sam CHUCKLES.

John and Teresa look at Sam awkwardly.

TERESA  
Sam. In future, please use the door  
as intended.

SAM  
Sorry.

TERESA  
What do you want? I'm busy.

SAM  
We--

JOHN  
(yelling)  
Your stupid drugs fucked us up!

Sam looks at John annoyingly.

SAM  
Dude. I said be cool.

JOHN  
I can recall memories. They come to  
life, like actual life. In front of  
me.

Teresa is intrigued.

TERESA  
Do you have anymore from that  
batch?

JOHN  
No. I just want a cure. This must  
of happened to other people.

TERESA  
I don't have a cure. I am intrigued  
though.

Teresa gets up and begins walking around the room, thinking.

TERESA (CONT'D)  
Bringing memories to  
life...interesting.

Sam sensing Teresa is up to something, interjects.

SAM  
My god look at the time. Don't you  
have that thing John?

John looks at Sam confused.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Yeah the baptism.  
(to teresa)  
Sucks we have to go. Well cya bye.

Sam grabs John and they rush out.

SAM (V.O.)  
There's one more thing I forgot to  
tell ya.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Sam and John are shooting pool.

SAM  
You can bring people from the  
present into your memories.

Sam takes a SHOT and sinks a red ball.

JOHN  
You said only the people from the  
memory will be there.

Sam lines up a shot and SINKS another red ball.

SAM  
Yeah, that's generally the rule.

Sam closes one eye while lining up the shot and SINKS another  
ball.

SAM (CONT'D)  
However, each of us have a ghost  
from our past that haunts us.

JOHN  
 (surprised)  
 Did you take lessons as a kid or something?

SAM  
 When you overcome that ghost, only then can you start to bring people into your memories. When that happens. You have total control.

Sam sinks the last ball. Game over.

SAM (CONT'D)  
 Understand?

JOHN  
 (thinking)  
 Chloe. She made me steal something a couple years back.

SAM  
 That's not it. Girls taking advantage of you is a result of something that would of happened earlier in your life. Think.

As John thinks harder, the colour fades again and we enter another memory. This time John is teleported to...

INT. JOHNS HOME, KITCHEN - DAY

John's parents are arguing in the kitchen.

John, now 5, peaks his head around the wall into the kitchen.

SARAH  
 Can't you do anything right! I gave you simple instructions. Pick up the boy from school!

Sarah picks up a bill from the table and waves it in his face.

SARAH (CONT'D)  
 And this! Two months behind in rent! What are we gonna do?

BEN  
 I spoke to the landlord. He assured me--

SARAH  
BULLSHIT!

Sarah SLAMS the bill down on the table and we return to...

INT. BAR - NIGHT

John opens his eyes. The colour returns.

Sam is standing in front of him waving his hand.

SAM  
John? You there?

JOHN  
My mother. She treats my dad like  
shit. He doesn't think he's worthy  
of real love.

SAM  
And neither do you.

JOHN  
Every girl I've dated. They've--

John looks up at Sam. He finally realizes it.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Sam...I'm my dad.

Sam smiles.

SAM  
Your ready.

INT. JOHN'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

John OPENS the front door.

JOHN  
Mom, Dad. I'm back. What's for  
dinner?

John continues to make his way through to the kitchen...

As John enters he's shocked to find...

Broken dishes on the floor.

The pantry open. Its been ransacked...

Near the pantry...drops of blood on the floor.

He follows them into the...

INT. JOHN'S HOME, LOUNGE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A knife with blood on it.

JOHN  
(scared)  
MOM!!

John sprints upstairs to his bedroom.

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

John quickly enters and is shocked to find...

Clothes scattered everywhere...

Drawers and cupboards open.

JOHN  
No, no, no, this can't be  
happening.

John continues to look around in panic. The whole room has been turned upside down.

BUZZ..BUZZ. His phone GOES OFF. John terrified, looks down at his pocket, pulls out his phone, stares for a moment, private. He answers.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
(slowly)  
Hello?

TERESA  
John. So good of you to answer. I was really disappointed. I was hoping to find some more of that special drug stashed at your home.

JOHN  
You can get as much DMT as you want. Why the fuck would you ransack my home?

TERESA  
You're a special case - your abilities. I was hoping you would have some left over from that batch.  
(beat)

(MORE)

TERESA (CONT'D)  
Oh well. Guess I'll just have to  
settle for your parents.

John's eyes widen. He rushes over to the mirror and stares  
back at himself. His breathing INTENSIFIES and becomes HEAVY.

TERESA (CONT'D)  
John?...You fucking hear me?

John tries to compose himself. PHONE STATIC RINGS OUT and  
begins to ECHO in John's ear, carrying through to his mind.

He shakes it off and regains his composure.

JOHN  
Let me speak to my dad.

A moment of silence and then...

BEN  
Son. I know your mother and I  
haven't always been the best  
parents, but I know you know what's  
right and--

A SCRAMBLE and Teresa is back on the line.

TERESA  
How touching. Everyone's always so  
dramatic.

JOHN  
What do I have to do?

TERESA  
That's easy. Get down here. I can't  
get anymore of that batch of DMT,  
so I need you. See you soon.  
(beat)  
One more thing. Sam's dead, I  
killed him, so don't bother trying  
to get his help.

CLICK. Teresa hangs up.

John lets out a huge SCREAM.

INT. WAREHOUSE, BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Ben and Sarah are tied up in the centre of the room. Tape  
over their mouths. We start to move to a corner of the room  
and see...

Chloe, alive but unconscious, locked in a see through chamber.

On the other side of the room, a desk with multiple monitors. They are receiving feeds from the many security camera's that fill the warehouse.

Teresa enters the room and takes a seat at the desk. She begins watching the monitors. She focusses in on the first.

MONITOR 1 - FRONT DOOR

John is at the front door being frisked by the guards. They let him in.

INT. WAREHOUSE, BACK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

TERESA

I knew your son wouldn't  
disappoint.

After a moment the door opens and the guards escort John into the room.

John notices Teresa suspended mid-air in the chamber and bolts over pressing his hands up against the glass.

JOHN

What've you done to her?

Teresa spins around.

TERESA

I have her here for testing. She  
took the same batch as you.

Teresa stands and begins circling John.

TERESA (CONT'D)

I wanna see it.

JOHN

What?

TERESA

You said you could bring memories  
to life. I want to see it.

JOHN

It doesn't work like that. I can't  
control it on command.

TERESA

Well maybe you need a little help.

Teresa looks over at the guards and gestures toward John's parents.

One guard grabs hold of John while the other pulls out a pair of plyers from his pocket and heads toward Ben.

He kneels down, grabs Ben's finger and rests the plyers next to it.

John tries to wriggle his way loose from the guards grip.

JOHN

Leave him alone!

Teresa gestures again to the guard holding the plyers.

He puts the finger in-between the plyers and...

BEN

AHHHHH!

The tip of the finger drops to the floor. Blood follows.

John closes his eyes and lets out a huge SCREAM...the colour fades and we enter a memory.

INT. CHLOE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

John opens his eyes.

We are in Chloe's bedroom. One year earlier. John is 17, Chloe is 16.

The two are sitting on the bed talking.

TERESA (O.S.)

Shit...You did it.

Present John turns to his right to see Teresa. They both turn their attention to past Chloe and John and observe the conversation.

CHLOE

So...I need this one favour.

Chloe snuggles up to past John.

PAST JOHN

It's always one favour.

CHLOE  
I promise it's just one. You know  
Greg? In our science class?

PAST JOHN  
Yeah.

CHLOE  
Well. He was an ass to me and my  
friends at lunch yesterday.

PAST JOHN  
(annoyed)  
So what'd you want me to do? Beat  
him up?

CHLOE  
Could you?

Chloe bats her eyes, playfully at John.

PAST JOHN  
No!

CHLOE  
(pissed)  
Did you just say no?

John is in shock as he continues to observe.

JOHN  
That's not how this memory was  
suppose to go. I specifically  
remember--

John's eyes widen.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
(thinking)  
Unless I managed to change the  
past. That was never one of the  
rules.

PAST JOHN  
I said NO!

As he says this, an EXPLOSION of light occurs. Both John and  
Teresa are blinded and we return to...

INT. WAREHOUSE, BACK ROOM - NIGHT

John opens his eyes. The colour returns. He's sitting on the  
floor. He slowly looks around and sees...

Teresa and her guards unconscious.

John quickly gets to his feet and UNTIES his parents.

John finds a gauze and wraps up his dad's finger.

They embrace. They all walk over and stare at the chamber that holds Chloe.

JOHN (V.O.)

Chloe didn't always make the right choices. Doesn't mean she was a bad person. She just saw the world in a different way. There is no good or evil. Just choices and the reasoning behind those choices.

BLACK.

THE END.