

"The Day Beauty Died"

Short Film Treatment – International Submission By John K Famelis 15 minutes | Drama / Allegory | €15–20K Contact: | +30 6984028282



Kate was sitting on the veranda, doing her nails while absent-mindedly leafing through a magazine. She murmured to herself, swinging her Louboutin sandals, the one she never took off, day or night.

"Look at that stupid Nicole James again. Just because she's a model, she's found a new boyfriend. Doesn't she see her boobs sagging? And she still wants teenagers? Well, good luck to the poor guy who'll have to milk her."

Her eyes turned toward the door just as Mike walked in. "Great," she thought. "All we were missing was his whining."

He came closer, said softly "How are you, my love?", and bent to kiss her. But she turned her face away with disgust. Lately, the sight of him repelled her.

If he hadn't been so quiet, so hardworking, and so faithful, she would have sent him to hell long ago. But the truth was, he worked like a dog all day at the big truck repair shop, took every overtime shift he could, and earned a small fortune. Every month, as soon as he was paid, he handed her his wages without a word. He lived on whatever he made from his extra side jobs — small repairs, wiring, painting — while treating her like his personal goddess.

The truth was that even at fifty, Kate still counted as a woman thoroughly taken care of — from head to toe. Her luxuries and shopping were never lacking. As many times a week as she wanted — hair, nails, extensions, gym, massage, solarium, dietician, personal trainer, cosmetics, the latest clothes — he never said no.

He even had one good thing about him: he never asked questions when he noticed changes in her appearance. He still believed her fuller breasts and long hair came from vitamins.

She could have had not one or two but three lovers if she wanted — with her looks, her charm, her friends, her self-confidence. But still...

They say it's no coincidence that when you hang around younger, brighter people, it's like getting injections of youth.

And thanks to that irresistible charm, she had managed to become Deputy Director of the city's largest real-estate firm without ever breaking a sweat — just by chewing gum, answering a few calls, and swaying in front of the old fool, Dan Marlow, the General Director. She had made him believe that one day he might enjoy more than a pat on her silicone-filled butt — which he himself had paid for, along with every other procedure.

Every time Kate whispered in his ear how "romantic" it would be if the dream she'd had were true — the two of them rolling together on some magical beach — the next morning a generous "sales bonus" appeared in her account, conveniently sliced off other employees' commissions. Dan, meanwhile, probably sent his suit to the dry cleaner's.

Mike, on the other hand — fifty-five years old, a man who'd worked hard outdoors since childhood, sunburned and bald, belly swollen from pizzas, burgers, and beer — was hardly in shape for exercise. Whenever Kate scolded him about everything, he just looked at her with a pleading face and said:

"Honey, can't you just leave me in peace? Working all day's enough — I don't need workouts now. That stuff's for you; you were born gorgeous."

Then he'd grab a beer from the fridge, collapse on the couch, and watch baseball — provoking even more irritation and disgust in his wife.

That's how it went that evening too — until the routine suddenly broke. The television went silent. Kate tried changing channels — nothing. Silence everywhere. She reached for her brand-new iPhone — the one Mike had bought her just a week ago — to call her friend Alex. No signal. Strange...

Night fell, and every device was dead. She looked out the window — empty streets, frozen lights. The air felt uneasy.

It must have been around two in the morning when the TV signal suddenly returned. But all the channels were broadcasting the same thing — a marching anthem. Now, there was no doubt: something serious was happening.

On the screen, a symbol appeared — one no one had ever seen before. A cold, metallic voice announced:

"As of today, Earth has been unified under the New Global Administration. All national governments cease to exist. From now on, humanity will operate as one collective system. Order begins anew."

Mike panicked at once. Kathryn, still chewing her gum, thought and sighed.

What nonsense, she told herself. Tomorrow was Saturday — her beauty day. She and Suzy, the new secretary, had everything planned: spa, extensions, nails, massage, hair, dinner, and finally, their "double date" with those two young tennis guys who looked at them like hungry wolves.

Who cared about "world governments"?

The rest of the night they both stayed awake. In the morning, Mike told her it was better not to leave the house — something was seriously wrong. But Kate was unstoppable.

"Go to work, Mike! What I do is my business. All this is ridiculous. This is America, not some third-world banana republic!"

He sighed, turned back to the couch, and switched on the dead TV out of habit.

Kate went upstairs, dressed as provocatively as she could, and left for the spa. But things outside were not good at all. The streets were empty, silent. When she reached the spa entrance, she froze.

A group of men in strange, armored uniforms had dragged all the employees outside. They stood them in a line — and executed them one by one.

Panic. Kate spun the car around and sped back toward home. She didn't get far. Another squad blocked the road, arrested her, and marched her with hundreds of others to a nearby stadium.

A giant screen lit up. At exactly noon, the announcement would begin.

And so, it did.

A tall, human-shaped construct — half metal, half flesh — appeared on the screen and spoke:

"Citizens will return to their workplaces, but with clear modifications. There will be no private property. No money. Private vehicles are forbidden. Processed food, plastics, hunting and fishing — all banned until the planet recovers. Nutrition will be plant-based and distributed by the State. And finally: any aesthetic alteration of the human body is henceforth prohibited."

Behind the ideology lay raw truth: microplastics, glitter, waxes, chemicals in the water, in the soil, in the fish. Artificial shine had returned through the food chain.

The Central Directorate no longer divided people by gender, but by privilege — those who had it and those who never would. No one would rise again because nature had granted them beauty, or because they knew how to exploit it through means not taught in universities.

In a single night, not only cosmetics and ornaments vanished — but also the illusion that appearance was an advantage. For the first time, beauty lost its power.

"What? What kind of stupidity is this?" Kate gasped. "A woman can't live without color her hair? Can't do without making her nails? Is that possible that she has not the right to lift her breasts? They must be joking!"

Her famous curls — the ones everyone turned out to admire — were extensions. Old man in the office had paid over \$1,800 for them, not to mention the silicone in her breasts and hips.

But the decree was clear: No citizen of the new community from now and on could alter their natural appearance in any way — under penalty of death. Even lipstick was a capital offense.

All women would now share the same haircut: a shoulder-length bob. To enforce it, scissors were handed out so each woman could cut the other's hair. Men were to keep their heads and faces clean-shaven, to preserve perfect uniformity. Hygiene for all would consist solely of green soap.

"Green soap? You've got to be kidding! Like those old Western Indians!"

Kate felt panic rising in her chest. At least if she could go to a salon — not be butchered by her neighbor like a sheep.

But before she could even think, the woman next to her — eyes full of envy — grabbed her by her perfect curls. With a cold, mocking smile, she began to hack them off. Then, smirking, handed Kate the scissors.

Tears poured down Kate's face. When she finally dared open her eyes, the irony cut deeper than the blades: the woman who had just mutilated her already had short, ugly hair — she didn't need a single snip.

"But you don't even need a haircut..." Kate whispered. "Oh, you poor thing," the woman sneered. "You should know — beauty isn't a talent. It's power. Unevenly distributed. But now, things are finally fair."

Days later, the new order came. Every citizen had to open closets, drawers — their entire lives — and surrender all "luxury consumer items": jewelry, clothes, perfumes, screens.

Kate stood before her wardrobe. She hurriedly stuffed a few of Mike's clothes and watches into a bag, threw in his three pairs of shoes — which she secretly despised for being so outdated — and handed the sealed sack to the officer waiting at the door.

Then she turned back inside. Slowly, almost ritualistically, she opened the secret door — the wardrobe no one had ever seen. Not even her best friend. Silk dresses. Heels. Perfume bottles arranged like soldiers. Lipsticks aligned like ammunition.

The first bag filled instantly. Tears welled up as she asked the officer for a second.

At some point, her phone slipped from her trembling hands. It lit up by itself.

NO SIGNAL.

On the screen — an old selfie: a stunning, made-up woman smiling proudly. The image flickered, then faded.

She held the phone like a small corpse, then placed it next to a pink gloss lipstick. Two weapons from a war that had ended.

A knock.

"You're late," a voice said.

Two officers entered — grey, silent.

"It's just a handover," one muttered.

He stretched out his hand. With trembling fingers, she handed over the bags.

He gave her the list to sign, staring at her sharply.

"Are you sure you didn't forget anything?"

Forget anything...? Her mind froze. The broadcast echoed in her head: "Concealment equals treason."

"Oh, yes... wait a moment," she whispered.

I almost forgot!!!

She wiped a red lipstick stain from her sleeve — a last goodbye. Then she froze again. A golden watch gleamed on the dresser.

A memory flashed: At the office. A half-open door. Tim — the young, athletic new hire. That night at the bar. Too many drinks. The motel next door. One night of madness. And the next morning — a kiss, a whisper:

"Time stops when we're together."

Just once. A fire that burned too bright to last. If there had been a second time, it would have turned everything to ash.

She brought the watch to her ear. Tick-tock. Like a heartbeat. She looked at the phone, pressed it against her chest, then dropped it into the bag. The metal hit the bottom with a dull sound.

The watch remained in her hand. She hesitated. And then, the voice from the loudspeakers again:

“Concealment is betrayal.”

Tears.

“It’s not about the watch,” she murmured. “It’s about me.”

The bag was sealed. Dragged toward the metal shredder — a long, thin scream of steel.

“My time melted with his,” she whispered.

The siren stopped. The room seemed emptier. Kate looked around her wardrobe — only two white garments, a comb, and a bar of green soap remained.

Nothing left to give. Nothing left to take.

Kate returned from the wastewater plant, carrying two metal food containers. “Adam!” she called. They sat down to eat.

There was no overtime anymore — no money. Just silence. Colorless. Indifferent.

The food was a tri-colored paste, strange to look at but not unpleasant. Its taste — balanced. Everything the body needed.

The salad was the same every day: finely chopped vegetables, unrecognizable. The fruit portion — identical.

No one knew what it was made of. Food not for pleasure, but for survival.

The new regime hadn’t come as punishment — but as therapy. It wasn’t Orwellian. It didn’t rule by fear — but by order. Yet order had a cost.

Fishing and hunting were forbidden. The seas and forests had to “rest.”

Empty shores. Silent harbors.

Violators paid without trial. The Directorate didn’t warn, didn’t argue — it simply executed.

There were no prisons anymore. Every act of disobedience was automatically recorded — no one needed to report anything. The smart networks did it all.

Disobedience was a virus. The cure — elimination.

In the streets, silence. Not fear. Habit.

Humanity had learned to breathe within the limits it was given.

“Maybe that’s why they killed beauty,” some said.

There was one more thing the World Administration sought above all: to end the conflict between the two sexes once and for all.

In previous years, women had fought for equality — and won. But it hadn't been enough. They went further, seeking the rise of matriarchy.

That might not have been wrong — if it had happened through fairness. But it evolved through power, artificial glamour, and fear of losing dominance. They began rejecting natural relationships, criminalizing attraction, and leading humanity into imbalance — sacrificing the primal weapon nature had given them: the hormonal pull toward the opposite sex.

That's why the Global Administration's core mission was nothing less than planetary rebirth.

"Not to punish — but to prevent the end."

Maybe, after a generation or two, paradise would return — for both sexes.

Meanwhile, Mike hadn't changed job, but he no longer worked as hard. Schedules were fixed, money didn't exist, and overtime had no meaning. No fast food, no beer, no soft drinks — all strictly forbidden under penalty of death.

They ate, looking into each other's eyes. They had four months left — the government's deadline to conceive a child through IVF.

Kate thought of herself.

Oh God, what will my body look like if I get pregnant? Her hands were already wrinkling, her nails a mess. Those perfect fingers with their semi-permanent polish — gone.

She looked at Mike. Strangely, the new regime had done him good. The diet, the shorter hours, the clean-shaven head and face — he looked younger than before.

What irony.

She stood up, opened a drawer, and pulled out a forbidden item — a mirror. She looked. And froze.

A stranger stared back. A wrinkled old woman, white hair, unevenly cut, no lashes, no extensions, no tan, no polish, no makeup. Just a khaki dress — like every other woman's.

Horror.

She screamed. Her pulse raced out of control.

The girl at the solarium rushed in, shaking her.

"Mrs. Kate ! Wake up! Oh, I'm so sorry — I didn't mean to leave you so long!"

Kate opened her eyes. The bright light above her hummed.

"You got a bit of a burn, that's all," the girl said quickly. "I'll apply a soothing cream. It's not that bad. You really don't need nightmares over it! Honestly, some clients pay me to leave them in fifteen minutes longer — just don't tell the boss."

Kate stepped out of the spa, still dizzy. She paused in front of the mirror at the exit.

Tanned. Flawless.

She touched her curls — her pride — still perfect. Lifted her breasts in the Wonderbra. Arched her hips.

Not angry. She smiled. Vanity and relief danced together inside her.

"God saved me," she whispered. "It was just a terrible dream."

She walked outside. Sweet sunlight. Cars honking. Billboards shining.

She is walking lighter now.

But deep inside her — a faint tremor remained. Not fear just Memory.

And the day went on — as if nothing had died. But something had hapened A watch that no longer ticked. Deep inside her.

Tick-tock... silence. Enough to wake her.

She turned the corner, took off the watch, kissed it lightly, and tucked it discreetly into a trash can.

She walked on — her graceful hips swaying. She almost turned to look back, then changed her mind.

Better this way.

Life goes on.

Never mind... it'll stay a sweet memory. Maybe if it had gone on, we'd have ended up like me and Mike today. Now that I think about it, with a little chasing, maybe I could make him a bit more tolerable.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

This is not a feminist dystopia. It is a love letter in the form of a scalpel.

A thin voice whispered:

"I'm not against the woman. I adore her. That's why I speak harshly — to wake her before she buries herself."

The war is not between men and women. It is within the woman — between the gift (raw, hormonal femininity) and the weapon (cosmetics, filters, unfair charm).

She fought to surpass man. She won. She lost the gift of eros. That's how Paradise has been lost forever for both sexes.

The regime is not the enemy. The relief is.

Shoot the irony:

Kate ages. Mike rejuvenates.

She laughs too loud.

The watch stops — not broken. Refusing to measure life without desire.

But it is better to keep just memory not the watch

No music. Let the silence accuse.

VISUAL & SOUND DESIGN

CONTACT & SUBMISSION

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