Monster

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We open on black. We hear the noises of a high school classroom and the voice of a teacher, MR. LEE addressing the final period of the day.

MR. LEE (O.S.)
I can wait. The only thing getting short-changed right now is your future.
(holds for laugh)
Seriously, though, I'm also evaluated on tomorrow's exam results, so let's all get a win.

SERIES OF TIGHT CLOSE-UPS:

ANGEL ALANIS (protagonist, high schooler) in class. We sense - but don't see - other STUDENTS around him. He discreetly glances into the black mirror of his CELL PHONE. His projected confidence is briefly shattered by the buzz of an incoming text.

TIGHT ON PHONE: Text from MOM, "Did you ace it?" in Spanish.

Murmurs from the class as MR. LEE hands out graded quizzes.

MR. LEE
Here's the good news, everyone passed the practice quiz.

ANGEL's QUIZ lands facedown on his desk (we see his name on it - ANGEL ALANIS. Angel's hands turn his quiz over: it reads "82%." Bummed, he forces a smile.

MR. LEE
But unless your name is Max, you still have an opportunity to perform better.

Angel glances at his bestie MAX(confident, energetic). MAX'S QUIZ reads "100%." Angel's HAND trembles, but he maintains a facade. We hear notes of menace growing closer, our MONSTER THEME.

MR. LEE
It's just a test, but also the system is broken, so your entire life path will be determined by tomorrow.

School bell rings

MR. LEE *
Ominous timing, but that's the day. *
Good luck, everyone! *

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - END OF DAY

Angel and Max are at their neighboring lockers. Angel fixes his hair in his LOCKER MIRROR.

MAX
I can't believe I got a 100. But the next test is the big one. Could mean the difference between getting into a good school or not.

Angel is silent, but we hear hints of Monster's Theme return.

MAX (cont'd)
Exam cram tonight?

Angel's hand trembles. The Monster's Theme grows. Angel sees the silhouette of a menacing DARK FIGURE in his mirror. Angel, terrified, SLAMS his locker shut.

MONSTER
I'm still here.

He runs down the hall, leaving a confused Max behind.

MOMENTS LATER

We track Angel in a tight closeup as he hurries down the hallway.

MONSTER (cont'd)
You're a failure. A nothing.

INT. SCHOOL - BATHROOM

Angel nearly trips as he rushes into a stall and closes the door behind him.

MONSTER (O.S.)
You're a disappointment. You'll always be a disappointment.

He peers under the partition, but no sign of the monster. Angel reaches into his bag and hurriedly pulls out a MULTI-COLORED CANDY. He rushes to get a piece out and drops the bag of candy on the floor.

ANGEL
No! No! No!

We hear the bathroom door creak. Lights flicker as the Monster's shadow stretches toward his stall. It's found him.

MONSTER (O.S.)
You're the problem. You're pathetic.

As the Monster draws closer, Angel scrambles to get pick up the candy bag. The Monster's shadow stops. It's right outside the stall door.

MONSTER (O.S.) (cont'd)
You can't do anything right. Why do you even try? Everyone would be better off if they didn't have to worry about a failure like you.

The Monster's fingers slowly push through the stall door.

Angel desperately digs a few of the candies out of the bag; several other candies fall into the toilet, but he's too panicked to even notice. He gulps them down in haste.

ANGEL ON:

Max enters the bathroom and he spots Angel's shoes under the stall door. Max is concerned, but then hears a loud flush and a calm, smiling Angel exits the stall.

ANGEL
Let's walk to my house.

MAX
Isn't your mom home? She can be intense about studying.

Avoiding the mirror, Angel scrubs his hands.

ANGEL
Forget the exam. Let's just watch tv.

Max looks floored.

MAX
(melodramatically)
Who are you, and what have you done with Angel?

INT. ANGEL'S BEDROOM - LATER

The friends sit on the floor, doom scrolling on their phones.

MAX (cont'd)
No way! Becky got early acceptance to McGill.

Angel's chill is starting to crack.

MAX (cont'd)
Maybe we should study?

MONSTER VOICE (O.S.)
Haha. Why even try?

ANGEL
(to himself)
Stop!

MAX
What? Angel, are you okay?

ANGEL
I'm fine I just need a... snack.

Angel reaches for the wrapper in his pocket. Panic sets in as Angel realizes it's empty. The Monsters Theme returns.

MONSTER (O.S.)
No escape.

ANGEL
(a whisper)
Shut up. Just leave me alone.

Max looks at Angel with concern.

MAX
I'm getting you some water.

Max moves to the bedroom door. The hallway light casts the shadow of the feet beneath the frame.

Max reaches for the knob as Angel's room begins to shake.

ANGEL
Wait!

Too late. Max opens the door to reveal the MONSTER, a black abstract, ghostly figure with no face. It dominates the doorframe, the hall light casting its shadow on Angel.

MAX
I'll be right back, I promise.

Max exits, walking through the Monster. The door closes.

Angel frantically blocks the door, but The Monster passes through the barricade and into the room.

Angel begins throwing open the DRAWERS. Searching for more candy as the Monster approaches.

He finds another wrapper, but it's EMPTY! Angel looks towards the door, but the Monster is gone.

From behind him, the Monster rises. It places its hands on Angel's shoulder.

MONSTER
Just you and me.

ANGEL
I'm FINE!

Angel pulls away, falling through the Monster and shattering a mirror on the desk.

CUT TO:

Max pushes his way into the room. Angel is on the floor. Broken glass and the contents of the desk drawer are strewn about. Max rushes towards his friend.

MAX
What happened?

From Max's perspective, we see the wrapper-filled drawer, not candy but a collection of empty pill bottles with the name Mireya Alanis on them.

Panic spreads across Max's face. He doesn't know what to do.

ANGEL
(weak)
Max, the monster. It's here.

MAX
It's just been you and me.

ANGEL
(horrified pause)
I know.

Angel looks towards the broken mirror. Rather than his own reflection, he only sees the Monster.

INT. Home - LATER

Angel sits on the couch across from his MOTHER, who we only see from behind.

Over mom, we're tight on Angel with Max by his side. Angel looks incredibly nervous. Max reaches out and takes Angel's hand.

Angel hands his mother a pill bottle.

MOM
Are those mine?

ANGEL
Mom, I need help.

Pulling out, we reveal the Monster, sitting beside Angel looking slightly smaller but still very much there.

END OF SHORT!