

ERASURE

written by

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INT. JULIAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The apartment is cluttered but lived-in. Bookshelves sag under the weight of dictionaries, thesauruses, and linguistic texts. Papers covered in scribbled words and diagrams are strewn across every surface. A single desk lamp flickers, casting long, uneasy shadows.

JULIAN (mid-30s, disheveled, unshaven) sits at his desk, scribbling furiously in a notebook. His hands tremble, his breath shallow.

CLOSE-UP on the notebook page: The word "elucidate" is written in jagged handwriting. Midway through, the ink begins to bleed, the letters dissolving into nothingness.

JULIAN (V.O.)
(whispering, desperate)
It's happening again. The words...
they're slipping away.
From me. From everything.

He slams the notebook shut, flinching at the sound. The WHISPERING WIND rises, curling through the room though the windows are closed.

INT. UNIVERSITY HALLWAY - DAY

The hallway is too bright. Fluorescent lights buzz like distant insects. Students move past Julian, their conversations warped, syllables bending, vowels stretched into nothingness.

Julian stops a STUDENT, their face blurred at the edges.

JULIAN
(urgent, shaking)
What did you say? Repeat it!

STUDENT
(confused)
I said, "I'll catch you later."
Is everything okay?

JULIAN
(staring, panicked)
No... it's not okay. Don't you see?
Everything's... slipping away.
Everything.
You see? It's... it's all
slipping away.

The student walks off, their body flickering slightly, like a glitch in reality.

JULIAN watches, his confusion deepening.

INT. JULIAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Julian is surrounded by chaos. The walls are covered in hastily scrawled words: "Syntax. Semantics. Phonemes. Morphemes." Some words are already fading, leaving ghostly imprints.

He flips through a massive dictionary, his hands shaking.

JULIAN
(frantic, to himself)
I have to hold on. I need to
preserve them—language is
everything. Without it, we're
nothing.

CLOSE-UP on the dictionary: The word "thought" begins to blur, the ink seeping into the page until only a blank space remains.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
(desperate, panicked)
No, not that one! Not yet! I can't
let it go!

He grabs a pen, but his hand trembles too violently to write.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

The street is eerily quiet, the air thick with fog. People walk past Julian, their faces blank, their mouths moving soundlessly. A STREETLAMP flickers, casting long, distorted shadows.

JULIAN (V.O.)
(trembling, soft)
What are they saying? What does
it mean?

He stops in the middle of the street, staring at the crowd. Their movements are jerky, unnatural.

JULIAN
(screaming, desperate)
Say something! Anything! Please!
Say anything!

The crowd turns to him, their faces merging into a single, featureless mask.

INT. JULIAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Julian is now writing on the walls, his handwriting frantic and illegible. "I must remember" is scrawled over and over, but they begin to fade as soon as he writes them.

CLOSE-UP on a word: "*Erasure*." It dissolves into nothingness.

JULIAN
(yelling)
No! No, no, no!

He collapses to the floor, clutching his head.

INT. UNIVERSITY HALLWAY - DAY

Julian rushes down the hallway, his footsteps echoing unnaturally. He stops at a door labeled "*PROFESSOR OF LINGUISTICS*."

He bangs on the door.

JULIAN
(pleading, frantic)
Please, you have to help me! What's happening?

The door creaks open. The PROFESSOR stands there, his face obscured by shadows. His lips move, but no sound comes out.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
(whispering)
Please... you must know.

The professor's lips move again, slowly, deliberately.

PROFESSOR
(no sound)
Words... are... gone.

Julian stares, his face a mask of horror.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Julian stumbles into the street, the world around him silent and empty. The buildings have no names. The sky is a blank void.

JULIAN (V.O.)
(soft, resigned)
I needed to know everything...
every word. Every meaning. I
thought I could hold onto it all.
But now, it slips away, no matter
how tightly I grasp.

He pulls out the last notebook he has. The page is blank.

JULIAN
(screaming, pleading)
No! Please... please, not this! Not
this too!

He presses the pen to the page, but as he writes, the ink begins to vanish, like it's never been there.

JULIAN (V.O.)
(whispering, broken)
It's gone... all of it.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

Julian stands in the middle of the street, the world around him silent and empty. People walk by, their faces blank, their mouths moving soundlessly.

JULIAN (V.O.)
(whispering, frantic)
What was the last word? What was
it? I can't... remember. It was
there, but now it's gone. Just like
everything else.

He closes his eyes, his body trembling. The world is silent.