

PLEADING THE FIFTH

Written by

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For ShowReel ShootOut.

Please feel free to edit, change, adjust this script. Use it in its entirety, or simply as inspiration. Just work your magic.

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INT. INTERROGATION ROOM — NIGHT

The air hums with fluorescent tension. A clock ticks. The suspect sits in silence—expression unreadable, arms crossed.

The OFFICER steps in with a folder, a coffee, and no more patience. Doesn't sit. Just circles.

OFFICER

You're quiet. I get it. You want to plead the Fifth. You've got that right, it's yours. You can wrap yourself in it like a warm little blanket, sleep soundly while the rest of us...

(beat)

... alright, here's the question: how long can you actually keep that up? Hmm? A day? Two? What happens when the silence gets louder than the truth?

They toss the folder down—photos spill out. Faces. Blood.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

Because silence doesn't make this disappear. Silence doesn't un-pull the trigger, doesn't unmake the mess. Silence is not a spell, and this is not a fairy tale.

They lean on the table, close, eye-level.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

You haven't asked for a lawyer. You haven't said a word. No denial, no justification, not even a lie, which at this point I'd accept as effort. Pleading the Fifth won't change the facts. It doesn't make us blind. It doesn't make you innocent. It just makes you... passive. And I promise you, passive people get eaten alive in rooms like this. You think this is a game? Huh? You sit there thinking maybe if you wait long enough, time folds in on itself and we forget what we saw. What the neighbors heard. What the cameras caught. You think staying quiet turns you into a ghost. But ghosts don't leave blood on the floor.

He begins to pace now, energy building.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

I'm trying to give you something. A rope. A ladder. A goddamn flashlight. You could use any of those. You could climb out. But instead? You just sit. Arms crossed. Jaw locked. Like that makes you strong. Like that makes you smart. But I've seen strong. I've seen smart. This? This is cowardice wearing a poker face at a table that's already folding.

Hand slams on the table. Controlled. Enough to rattle a cup.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

You know what you did. I know what you did. And if I know it, then the jury will know it. And if the jury knows it? Game over. So you can sit there, Mr. Statue of Liberty, holding your silence like it's sacred—but that torch won't burn forever.

Voice drops. Colder now.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

There's a victim. Out there. Real person. Real name. And right now? They've got less of a voice than you do. That's the irony. That's the tragedy. And that? That's what keeps me up at night.

They walk toward the door. Stops. Looks back.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

You want to stay silent? Fine. Be silent. That's your right. But once I walk out that door — once I say we're done here — That's it. No more clarifications. No more explanations. No more say. That door swings shut, and you stop being part of the story. You just become the ending.

THE END