

"HEADLINES"

written by
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THE PEOPLE

MARTIN FOX: Age 32. Journalism Professor fired from Antioch College. Always unshaven and partial to shorts and tennis shirts. He is a restless user of ladies.

ROSS FOX: Martin's 40 year old brother. A box-like man. Tries to paint and secretly enjoys Martin's escapades.

NICK MONTGOMERY: 50 year old part time nemesis of Martin. Lives in the next apartment. His wife is a lovely lady named Sue.

IRENE SHERIDAN: 37 and lonely. Gets special things from Martin. Comes across classy in public, but falls apart around Martin.

LEXY ERWIN: The mystery woman. Age 18. Tells Martin she is from out of town, and a new student in college. She has a fresh look and a virgin beauty. Sexiness, however, throbs off every part of her.

SUE MONTGOMERY: Nick's wife. Is a young looking 47. She has an understanding ear, and a soft shoulder.

The action takes place in Martin and Ross' apartment. It is the spring of the year.

THE LONE SET

(This teleplay takes place entirely in Martin and Ross' apartment. It is a dreary and worn out place. Dim light and shadows mask the cracks.)

It is a three walled set, the camera is the final wall. The stage right wall is a bookshelf filled with books, newspapers, and printing materials.

Stuck in the upstage right corner is a stove, sink, fridge, and cabinets. Continuing, the center back wall has a door leading to an assumed bedroom.

In the stage left corner of the set, is a bathtub. It sits lengthwise along the left stage wall. It is the old type, with legs, and pipes sticking out from the wall. The front door is at the foot of the tub. It opens into a hallway.

Left center is a weight bench. Lengths of steel and loose weights litter the floor.

A warped round wood table with matching chairs sits to the right of the weight bench. Glasses and old dishes are piled on the table.

The room is painted in a sultry green. The trim is in a deep brown. The floor is an unfinished oak.

Paintings of almost every fruit decorate every wall and cervise.

Even if the apartment has just been thoroughly cleaned, it still looks dingy and strewn about.

SUPER TITLE:

Headlines

TITLE OUT.

THEN, SUPER OVER BLACK:

Page One

SUPER OUT.

FADE IN:

ROSS FOX is peeking out the peep-hole in the front door. He is nervous and hopping on the balls of his feet.

IRENE SHERIDAN sits at the head of the bathtub in a chair from the table. Her legs are crossed, and the one on top is swinging.

ROSS

Martin's here! Just a few more steps and he'll be back. Just like I said he would.

IRENE

You said that hours ago.

Ross steps back from the door, and MARTIN FOX bursts into the apartment. He slams the door behind him. He has a package tucked under his arm.

Martin marches to the table and tosses his cap down. He does not see Irene.

MARTIN

Ross, the bus ride was putrid. Headline! Cheltenham Bold. 24 point. 'Man Dies From Under Arm Odor.' Not a pretty smell.

ROSS

(motions to Irene)
Ah, Martin...

Martin throws the package at Ross.

MARTIN

I got you more paints. Brown and black. What are you painting now?

ROSS

Strawberries and oranges.

Martin starts to unbutton his tennis shirt.

MARTIN

That bus ride reminded me of the days I taught at Antioch. Hellish fight just to breathe.

Oranges? Better make the fruit rotten then. You should paint more than fruit, Ross. Real people. I keep tellin' you that.

ROSS

Martin! Irene is here.

Martin slowly turns and finds Irene waiting for him. He re-buttons his shirt. He is angry.

MARTIN

I told you never to come here.

Irene gets off the chair. She faces Martin with intense eyes.

IRENE

Martin, you said you'd call. I can't stand being away from you. It's been so long.

MARTIN

Headline! Universe Demi-bold. 36 point. 'Fired Journalism Professor Murders Tramp.'

IRENE

You stop that, Martin! Why have you done this to me? We had something. You said we did.

MARTIN

Go home, Irene. You've worn out everything. No commitments, remember?

IRENE

(crying)
Take that back right now.

ROSS

Martin, maybe you should take a bath.

MARTIN

'On your terms.' You told me.
I don't need it from you anymore.
You're not the only woman with a
bedroom.

IRENE

Who are you seeing? Who else?

MARTIN

Let it go. No, Irene, I'll tell
you. Her name is Lexy. A new
Freshman. She is sexy and we get
along.

IRENE

I'd knock on you door late at night.
Nobody would answer. I could hear
you screaming headlines. I know
you heard me.

MARTIN

(screaming)
Get out of here! Now!

Ross takes Irene by the arm and leads her to the door.

ROSS

This is bad, now, Irene. Maybe
we should all cool down.

IRENE

I love him. He was over almost
every night. Every night...

Martin stalks to the kitchen corner and grabs a beer from
the fridge.

ROSS

Take care of yourself, Irene. You'll
do fine.

Before Irene walks out the door, she yells at Martin.

IRENE

You will pay for this, Martin!
I swear you will. You're a dirty
little boy!

Ross pushes her the rest of the way out. Ross walks back to
the table, sits and opens his package of paints.

Martin leans against the cabinets and drinks his beer.

ROSS

Martin, why are you so hurtful
to people?

Martin takes his shirt off. He calms down.

MARTIN

Only to women, Ross. They are mean
and cruel, and I make them play
by my rules. I give them pleasure
at a price. And Irene just broke
rule # One, thats all.

ROSS

What about Daina, Kim, Sherry,
Pamela...

MARTIN

All the same. They wanted only
me. I can't just handle one at
a time, Ross. Thats rule # Two.

A knock on the door.

ROSS

What if that's Irene?

MARTIN

I'll handle it.

Martin opens the front door, and is surprised to find NICK
MONTGOMERY and not Irene.

MARTIN (CON'T)

Hey, Nick.

Nick enters with a large pan of fried chicken and a hot
mitt.

NICK

Sue wanted me to make sure you
two get some meat at least once
a week. Shake and Bake chicken.
I helped shake.

ROSS

Golly, Nick, tell her thanks.
Look, chicken, Martin!

MARTIN

Headline! Baskerville Italic.
38 point. 'Neighbor Shakes Chicken
To Death.'

NICK

Listen, you smart Alec. You don't
have to eat any if you don't want
to.

MARTIN

No, no, I'll eat.

They all sit around the table and Nick watches them eat the
chicken.

NICK

Had quite an afternoon, huh?
I listened to the argument
through the peephole. Another
one of your 'ladies', Martin?
Looked awful nice to me.

ROSS

(through chicken)
That was Irene.

NICK

And you told her 'goodnight',
eh, Martin?

Nick laughs at his joke. Martin ignores him and wipes his
mouth on Nick's hot mitt.

NICK (CON'T)

Watch it now. You'll get caught
one of these days and you won't
be able to save your rear.

ROSS

Martin says he knows the rules.

Martin takes his cue. Puts down the chicken and leans back.

MARTIN

Whenever I got a problem, Nick, I
take a bath. After the scrubbing,
I sit there in the tub, activate the
drain, and I close my eyes. There,
I feel the water leave my body. It
doesn't go fast, because I have a slow
drain and I like it that way.

(MORE)

MARTIN (CONTINUING)

So, for ten minutes I sit with a drying topside and soapy opposite. My breathing becomes heavy, because the gravity is slowly coming back, and I get cold. Bein' born is what it's like. Then, towards the end, the last part tickles my ass and finally giggles down the drain. I have the answer to my problem. Then I start all over again. It's really quite marvelous.

NICK

This happen often?

MARTIN

Least offensive armpits in this room.

Martin smiles and picks up another piece of chicken.

ROSS

This chicken is tasty. Maybe I'll paint a chicken next.

MARTIN

People, Ross. Paint people.

NICK

(getting up)

Yeah, well me and Sue don't have to take many baths. She does what I tell her, or I just don't do it.

Martin perks, and stops eating.

MARTIN

Really? I found Sue rather domineering.

Martin crushes the empty beer can in his hands.

NICK

Huh?

ROSS

Oh, Martin, no!

MARTIN

She's really a sweet woman. For an older lady, that is.

NICK

You and Sue? I don't think so.

MARTIN

You're away so much, Nick. You think about that.

NICK

You little...

ROSS

Martin, how could you?

NICK

You're a dirty...

MARTIN

I took a bath this morning.

Nicks stands and shakes his finger at Martin.

NICK

You're a dead man, Fox. You'll get it in the back. You will someday, I know.

Nick picks up the rest of the chicken and goes to the door. At the door, Nick angrily throws the chicken back at Martin.

NICK (CON'T)

You stay away from my Sue!

Martin ducks the chicken. Nick salms the door behind him. Martin begins to draw a bath. Ross follows him to the tub.

ROSS

You didn't really do things with Nick's wife, did you Martin?

MARTIN

Headline! Optima Semi-bold. 42 point. 'Fantasies Fulfilled.' Story page two.

ROSS

Gosh, that's bad.

Martin pulls off his shoes and throws them across the room. They land inside the bookcase.

MARTIN

Not really. Picture all the lonely, frustrated women in the world, Ross. I help them feel good.

ROSS

How does it make you feel?

MARTIN

Get my robe, huh?

Ross goes into the bedroom.

MARTIN (CON'T)

Irene was okay, really. But since I met Lexy, well forget it. We met at the cinema. She's special Ross. Real special.

Martin feels the water. He takes off his shorts and eases himself into the bathtub.

MARTIN (CON'T)

Yessir. This Lexy is quite a young little Miss.

FADE OUT.

SUPER:

Mid-Section

SUPER OUT.

FADE IN:

Martin is pumping iron on his weight bench. He stops, and paces. He checks his stomach for muscle. He stops pacing and lays on the table and does legs lifts. Martin paces more, then starts to scrub out the bathtub.

Ross comes through the front door. He has a sack.

MARTIN

Ross! Finally you're back. Lexy's coming over.

ROSS

Picked up some bread and more fruits. I'm going to try to paint a tomato today.

MARTIN

Ross, listen to me. Lexy is coming over. Here, to this apartment.

ROSS

Ooo. For weeks I've been hearing about her. Why is she coming over?

MARTIN

I don't know, yet. But you need to hide in your room when she does.

ROSS

Well, I suppose. I guess I can mix my paints then.

MARTIN

Sure, sure. Mix away. Ross, I tell you, Lexy is like art. Carved as Michelangelo must've created his David, she is.

ROSS

Maybe I could paint her!

MARTIN

Paint her? Paint me!

ROSS

But, Martin, I don't know you. I can't paint something I can't hold. Something I can't feel.

MARTIN

What?

ROSS

I'll try, Martin. I'll try to paint you.

MARTIN

Headline! Futura 4-B. 48 point. 'Brother Stabs Brother With Paint Brush.'

ROSS

You didn't hear anything I said.

MARTIN

Sure I did. I'm going to put on a clean shirt. Stay here and listen for her knock.

Martin goes into the bedroom.

Ross puts his sack down and stretches. He goes to Martin's weight set and tries to curl a dumb bell...but cannot.

A knock on the door.

Ross opens the front door and finds LEXY ERWIN. She is very beautiful and in a wheelchair. Ross isn't certain what to do. We can see that she has nice legs.

LEXY

Hi. I'm Lexy. Are you Ross?

ROSS

Uh, huh. Come in. Can I help?

LEXY

(wheeling in)

I can get around most places all right. Man across the hall helped me up the stairs, though.

ROSS

You mean Nick?

LEXY

I think that was his name.

ROSS

Can I get you something?

LEXY

Martin. Please.

(a smile)

If you could. I have a bus to catch soon.

ROSS

Okay.

Ross starts to go to the bedroom, but is met by Martin half way there.

MARTIN

Lexy! God, it is good to see you babe.

Martin kisses her. Ross, upset, calls Martin over to the bathtub.

ROSS

Martin, could you come here?

MARTIN

Excuse me. I think he needs
to memorize my flesh tones.

Martin goes to Ross.

ROSS

Is that her? Lexy? The 18
year old Freshman?

MARTIN

Yeah, so? She's great. I take
care of her.

ROSS

But, Martin...she's in a...a
wheelchair! A cripple. Like
Ironsides.

MARTIN

She had a car accident. Been in
the chair since she was 14.

ROSS

But Martin...

MARTIN

It's okay, all right? In fact,
it's great. I can handle her.
She doesn't fight back. I can
handle her fine.

LEXY

Martin? I need you here now.

MARTIN

You go in your room like you promised.
Paint something good.

Martin pushes Ross into the bedroom. He goes to Lexy's side.

MARTIN (CON'T)

What can I get for you, love?

LEXY

Martin. I have to tell you
something very awful.

MARTIN

Okay, tell.

LEXY

I want out. I want to end it....

MARTIN

What?!

LEXY

(continuing)

Because I don't love you.
Because you are too old.
Because I am in a wheelchair.
Because...I don't love you.

Martin is crushed! He has never been rejected before.

MARTIN

But, I bent the rules! I have
only been seeing you. We can take
some time off...

LEXY

No Martin. Either it is or it is
not. It's over.

MARTIN

We need more time. I've been through
this a thousand times in my head.
Just more time, thats all.

LEXY

I can feel it, Martin. It is cold
and barren. My heart is like my
legs...dead.

Martin is getting worked up.

MARTIN

What did I do? Huh? I can take
care of you. Give you presents.

LEXY

No, Martin.

He gets on his knees to look her in the eye.

MARTIN

Please.

LEXY

Open the door. Let me out.

MARTIN

Not until I get some answers. I
never hurt you.

Lexy wheels her chair way from Martin. He follows her.

LEXY

Let me go!

Her speed increases.

MARTIN

Come here. You look me in the eye and say good-bye. You can't do it!

Lexy wheels around the table. Her turn is wide...

LEXY

Please!

...and she runs into the weight bench. Lexy tumbles over in the chair and falls to the floor.

Silence.

Martin races to the phone.

MARTIN

Lexy! God, I'm sorry. I'll call...

Lexy gets to her feet! She stands tall and dusts herself.

LEXY

Forget it, Martin.

Martin is frozen. She isn't paralyzed. He is unbelieving.

LEXY (CON'T)

It's all a lie, Martin. Shattered the rules you play by. Only a lie. Just what you've been living.

MARTIN

I don't understand. Lexy?

LEXY

Revenge? Calming troubled waters? That's all I wanted to do, Martin. Pay you back. Actually, make you pay.

MARTIN

Pay? For what? Lexy, what's going on? Who are you?

LEXY

For what you did to my mother.

MARTIN

Who?

LEXY

Irene Sheridan. You remember her, I would hope. Otherwise this game hasn't much effect.

MARTIN

Irene? But I didn't love her.

LEXY

I swore I would get you back for what you did to her. Hurt her like that...and then cast her away.

Martin sits down, weary.

MARTIN

I gave her what she asked for, though.

LEXY

And you took it away. No reason, no good-bye. I have to go.

Martin stands, holds Lexy's arms and makes her look him in the eye.

MARTIN

But what about us? I don't understand. I don't want to. I'm going to wait for you, Lexy.

LEXY

Don't bother, Martin. It was a joke, that's all.

A knock on the door.

LEXY (CON'T)

I can't say I'm glad...

Martin opens the door and Nick is there.

MARTIN

Nick.

Lexy picks up the wheelchair, and folds it down.

NICK

I wanted you to know that Sue
and I are departing. 'Separating'
they call it in the newspapers.

Lexy goes to the door and Nick countercrosses.

LEXY

I hope you learned something,
tonight, Martin. I know I did.
Guard your heart.

Nick listens.

MARTIN

Stay, Lexy. I need you.

LEXY

No, Martin.

She slides out the door. Martin tries to follow her, but
Nick steps in front of the only through route. Nick's shuts
the door behind Lexy.

NICK

So it happened to the cool
young professor. Headline!
'Jerk Gets It Through The
Heart.'

MARTIN

Shut up, Nick.

NICK

You got caught, Martin. And nobody
cares. I told you it would happen.

MARTIN

Leave me alone.

NICK

I came over to beat the crap out
of you, Martin. But some little
Missy beat me to it.

MARTIN

(opens door)
Get outta here!

NICK

I'm going. You're a Jerk, and
now you know it. I'll see you
later, Martin.

Martin slams the door behind Nick. He is alone.

MARTIN

(soft)

Headline! Century Schoolbook
Bold. 48 point. 'Cripple Walks
All Over Jerk.'

Martin begins to pace. His intensity and anger grows.

MARTIN (CON'T)

Headline! Bodoni Bold. 50 point.
'Nick Slays Man With Truth.'

Martin is shouting. He throws a loose weight into the bookshelf.

MARTIN (CON'T)

Headline! Alternate Gothic #1!
56 point! 'Fired Professor Runs
Over Two With Wheelchair!' Page
one, column one.

Ross peeks out of the bedroom door. He sees a ranting Martin and comes out into the light.

ROSS

Martin? I heard the screaming
headlines! Whats the matter?

MARTIN

Duped by my own rules, thats what.
Lexy is a lie. All a lie.

ROSS

Huh?

MARTIN

It's all very easy, really.
Headline! Times Roman. 58 point.
'Love Trap Snaps Idiot's Neck.'

ROSS

I thought she loved you.

Martin is winding down.

MARTIN

Leave me alone, Ross. Go back to
your fruits. Paint some more
bananas.

ROSS

I was...

MARTIN

(up cut)

You don't understand, Ross.
You've never been in love.

Ross, hurt, starts to go back into the room. He stops and speaks to Martin first.

ROSS

That may be, Martin. But
neither have you.

Ross closes the door gently behind him. Martin is defeated. He plunks down at the table, and places his head in his arms.

FADE OUT.

SUPER:

The End Page

SUPER OUT.

FADE IN:

Martin is asleep in the bathtub. His feet and arms hang over the side. As the last part gurgles down the drain, Martin wakes up. Yawns.

Ross enters from the bedroom with a large canvas. He places his painting on the table.

MARTIN

'Morning, Ross.

ROSS

How did you sleep?

MARTIN

I was thinking. Napping, really.

ROSS

How was your date?

Martin grabs a towel. Starts to dry his limbs.

MARTIN

Terrible. Joan is smart and pretty.
And she's a new Freshman.

ROSS

Like Lexy, huh?

Martin wraps the towel around his waist. He stands and brings his robe around his body. The towel drops to the floor. Martin begins doing knee bends.

MARTIN

Joan wanted it last night. She really did. But did she want me? She says she loves me...

ROSS

I'm sorry.

MARTIN

(finishing)

...and she can give me more than I could want. But I can't love her. I take off my clothes like I've done with the others, kiss her...and the moment comes. She welcomes me, and I want it bad. I'm angry...but I just can't.

ROSS

What are you gonna do, Martin?

MARTIN

Tell her to leave. Pack it up and shove out. That's best, I think. She shouldn't be tangled with me. She should be free to do Freshman things. To run and jump and play around. I'm too old anymore, for that Ross.

ROSS

How did she take it?

MARTIN

Haven't told her yet. Headline! Souvenir Light. 60 point. 'Joan Loves Martin: Martin...Doesn't.' God, I am becoming progressively worse at that.

Ross holds his painting up to the light.

ROSS

I wish this would dry faster.

MARTIN

What's the painting of?

ROSS
Nothing. I need more paint.
It's almost dry, maybe.

Martin stops his exercise and goes over to look at the canvas.

MARTIN
What is it, I said.

ROSS
It's you.

Martin studies the painting.

MARTIN
You said you wouldn't paint me.

ROSS
Couldn't paint you. After you
said those things to me the other
night, I felt you for the first
time. It hurt, Martin.

MARTIN
I'm sorry, Ross. I am, really.

ROSS
That's okay. I'm going down to
the store. I need more gray and
thinner.

Ross checks his pockets for money. He goes to the front door.

MARTIN
Don't leave me here alone, Ross.
Not now, huh?

Ross opens the door.

ROSS
I need gray to finish your
eyes, Martin. I'll be back.

He waves and closes the door behind.

MARTIN
(waving back)
Go ahead and leave. I'll be
fine. It's fine, really.

Martin goes to the kitchen area and looks for food. Seeing nothing to his taste, he looks around the apartment looking for something to leap out at him, so he can play with it.

A knock on the door.

Martin goes to the door, opens it. Waiting at the threshold is SUE MONTGOMERY.

SUE

Hello, Martin. May I come inside?

He steps aside. She enters and looks around the place.

MARTIN

Sue, I didn't think you'd ever want to see me again. After Nick and all.

Sue places her hand against Martin's cheek.

SUE

Now love, settle down. Nick and I have been through worse. We'll take care of it on our own.

MARTIN

I'm sorry, Suzie. I didn't mean to be bad and hurt you.

SUE

How are you? Nick said you had a problem.

Martin turns away from her and sits down on his weight bench.

MARTIN

Lexy.

Sue lets Martin alone for now, and goes over to the table and looks at the painting.

SUE

That's a pretty picture.

MARTIN

Ross painted it. Looks frighteningly real, don't you think?

SUE

It looks fine, Martin. Did you two like the chicken?

MARTI

Very good. A little messy, though.

SUE

Good. How are you?

She goes to him and sits down. She holds his hand.

MARTIN

I miss you. It was calm and nice being alongside you.

Sue strokes his fingers.

SUE

You're a gentle man, Martin. Tell me about Lexy.

MARTIN

Oh, I don't know. I take baths and try to forget. Try to forget the stench of her perfume, the tint in her voice. I even go out with girls like her. But I can't forget.

SUE

Tell her, Martin.

Martin stands and begins to pace.

MARTIN

I can't! What frightens you the most, huh? Waking up and having the world blown away while you slept? Finding another wrinkle along the outline of your eye? What scares the hell out of you?

You know what scares me, Suzie? Falling in love. Never have, never needed to. Screw the old hag up town and the young Miss across the way and everyone gets what they crave. But...Martin Fox, age 32, fired from Antioch College for sexual misconduct, has met his match. He's fallen in love. And he's scared.

SUE

I'm here, baby.

Martin goes to her. He takes her hand and squeezes it hard. He is trembling. She tries to calm him with her smiles.

MARTIN

Why? I hurt you like I hurt
the rest! You should hate me.

Sue breaks his grasp and runs her fingers through his hair.
She calms him and speaks in a warm voice.

SUE

You know what my worst fear is?
It is being alone, Martin. Nick
is away and I'm left to myself.
I sit, and all the things I'm
not, come back and tap on my mind.
Reminding me of everything that
hurts.

You made me feel like I meant
something to someone. That me,
Suzie Montgomery, was important.
You should be proud of that,
Martin.

Martin gets up, and brings Sue with him.

MARTIN

Run away with me. I'll take
you away and we'll...be something.
Please...

Sue shakes her head, and calms Martin down again.

SUE

There's only one thing we could
have, Martin. Nick's a good man.
I need more than a lover.

MARTIN

I can be, I'll show you.

SUE

Martin, honey, we're friends.
That's all...just close friends.
Is that so bad?

Martin realizes that he is tired again. He sits down. Sue
does too.

MARTIN

I guess not.

SUE

Now you go, and you tell that
Lexy how you love her...

MARTIN

Lexy hates me.

SUE

(continuing)

...and if she rejects you, then you go on, and live, and keep loving.

MARTIN

I did once! I told her I loved her. Why is that never enough?

SUE

It is. That's the secret, to keep loving no matter what.

MARTIN

Never again. It hurts too much.

SUE

(angry)

Martin, stop it!

MARTIN

You don't understand!

SUE

(calmer)

I do. You go and talk to her. I'll be here if you need me. You must love to be happy. I know, Martin. I know how much it hurts.

Martin stands and brings Sue up with him by her shoulders.

MARTIN

I love you, Suzie.

SUE

I love you too, baby.

They embrace and hold each other for a long moment.

Martin breaks and wipes his eyes.

MARTIN

God, I feel so old.

SUE

I'm old, Martin.

MARTIN

You, my love, are beautiful.

SUE

If you need me, let me know.
I'll help if I can.

Sue goes to the door. Martin opens it for her. Before she exits, Martin kisses her on the lips. They both smile.

SUE

You go tell Lexy.

MARTIN

Okay.

Sue starts to leave. Martin grabs hold her hand.

MARTIN (CON'T)

Suzie...if...you ever need someone...
I'll be here. I'll always be here
for you too.

She kisses him good-bye on his cheek.

SUE

You're a good man, Martin.

Sue walks away down the hall. Martin watches her.

When she is gone, he closes the door. Martin seems refreshed.
He inhales and exhales, as if breathing for the first time.

He goes to the table, looks at Ross' painting of him.

Martin goes to the cabinets. He finds a nail and hammer.

He picks up the painting, and with nail and hammer goes to
the back wall. He pounds the canvas above his bathtub.

He surveys the painting, turns and faces the room, scans it.

He speaks to the painting.

MARTIN

Headline! Helvetica Bold. 96
point....

Martins drifts. His mind has gone.

He stands, silent.

Martin comes back with a start. His eyes re-focus.

MARTIN (CON'T)
(finishing)
...oh, hell. Fill it in for
yourself.

Martin turns away and leaves the apartment by the front door in an instant. We HEAR him LOCK the FRONT DOOR. We are left alone.

We pause on the empty set. Now, a SLOW ZOOM IN ON THE PAINTING.

For the first time, the painting is clear and in focus.

The painting is of Martin in a wheelchair. Blue tears are dripping down from unpainted soon-to-be-gray eyes. In his hands, rests a small basket of fruit.

FADE OUT.

THE END