

**EXT. AMUSEMENT PARK- NIGHT.**

Alone in the open cabin of a Ferris wheel, CLAIRE, a young woman in her 20's, sits by herself. Her hands tightly grip the handlebars.

SCREEEEEECH. The entire ride wobbles, then slows to a complete stop. Claire looks down at the vertiginous drop, and regrets it. She squeezes her eyes shut and breathes. As she looks up, her eyes focus on the cabin by her side.

A CLOWN sits there. He is a young man in full makeup. Red painted nose. A crooked hat. His costume looks rumpled. His makeup is smudged around the eyes.

CLOWN

Oh, hi.

The Clown wipes his teary eyes with a gloved hand as he looks up towards Claire.

CLAIRE

Oh, God, no.

CLOWN

I know. I know. I just finished clown school. First day. Didn't go... great.

CLAIRE

I hate clowns.

CLOWN

Hah, I've gotten that a lot today. Everyone hates me. Including me, sometimes.

The Ferris wheel creaks lightly.

CLAIRE

Please stop doing whatever this is. Do you know how long until they get this thing running again?

CLOWN

Like I said, first day.

CLAIRE

Do you usually terrify strangers on your first day?

CLOWN

No. No! Terrifying is not in the curriculum! I can juggle and do face-painting, balloons! Here, let me show you.

Before she can respond, he pulls out three foam balls. He starts juggling. For half a second, it works. Then one ball falls. It rolls over the edge of his cabin and into the darkness below.

CLOWN

...That isn't supposed to happen.

CLAIRE

(flat)

Is that what they teach you in clown school?

The Clown puts the remaining balls in his pocket.

CLOWN

Okay. New approach. I can also mime.

He begins an elaborate routine, pulling an invisible rope, opening an invisible door, and gesturing grandly.

CLOWN (CONT'D)

This part needs a bit of audience interaction.

CLAIRE

There's no way I'm doing that

The clown slumps dramatically.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Fine. If you do anything weird, I scream.

He lights up. They begin miming together, awkward at first. The Clown starts to mime a ball. He "throws" the ball at her. She throws it back and immediately realizes she's thrown it the wrong direction. The clown looks down. Watches it descend forever. Shrugs.

Claire laughs.

CLOWN

My first laugh of the day! Small victories! Tiny triumphs!

Claire holds up a hand, mimicking a high-five across the gap. He bows, then pretends to lift her hand toward his heart.

CLAIRE

Don't be flattered. This is a fear response.

The Clown clutches his heart.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

I guess... maybe I'm surviving this.

The Ferris wheel creaks once again.

CLOWN

That's most things, right? A little scary. A little fun.

ATTENDANT (O.S)

Thank you for your patience! Ride will resume shortly!

The clown fumbles with his costume, pulling out a long string of multicolored fabric: red, blue, yellow until finally, white. He waves it at her like a surrender flag. Claire removes her scarf. Waves back. The ferris wheel begins to move. Their cabins drift apart. They watch each other until the distance becomes too wide.

BLACKOUT.