

A STORY TREATMENT

TRANSFORMATION

by Kenneth Draconian

ORIGINAL TREATMENT

CONFIDENTIAL

THE PIECE

Transformation

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LOGLINE

Two broke scientists sit on an unfinished drug that can change a person's sex. When the money runs out, one of them doses the other. What walks out of that dinner is a woman named Stacy, and she will have a hundred million dollars or a corpse.

FORM

Feature-length story treatment. Present tense. Approximately 95–110 minutes.

Genre: scientific thriller / revenge tragedy.

Tone: cold, bitter, and close to the bone. No jokes. No redemption speech.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS

Dr. Maxwell

The partner who will not wait. Day-job scientist, nights in a borrowed lab, marriage already gone. He believes a result, any result, is better than another year of refusal. He doses people. He lies about it. When the drug finally works, he tries to keep the profit.

Dr. Jefferies / Stacy

The partner who did more of the work and still gets overruled. Careful with candidates, furious when Maxwell goes behind his back. After a quadruple dose he comes through the change as Stacy, built like a supermodel and finished with patience. She wants Maxwell dead, or a hundred million for what he did to her. She will not take a third offer.

Rusty

A man who wants to be a woman and is a bad candidate for an unfinished drug. Jefferies turns him away. Maxwell does not. After the dose, Rusty is gone. No body. No answer. He is the proof the drug can erase a person, and the reason the partnership breaks.

THE TREATMENT

One failure after the next

Dr. Maxwell and Dr. Jefferies have regular jobs. On paper they are working scientists with badges, hours, and supervisors who do not know what the two of them keep in a side lab after the building empties. What they have is a wonder drug. It is meant to let anyone change their sex. It is not perfected. It has never been perfected. Trial after trial ends the same way: a bad reading, a subject who does not hold, a batch poured out because neither man will sign his name to it.

The money is gone before the science is. Both of their wives have already left. The houses are quiet. The government grants are gone. The loans are gone. For next year the government has refused any more

money until it sees results. Maxwell and Jefferies know what that sentence means. Another year of day jobs. Another year of an unfinished drug in a refrigerator that does not belong to them. Another year of nothing to show.

The bad candidate

Rusty wants to be a woman. He says it plain. He has heard what the two doctors are working on, or enough of it, and he offers himself. Jefferies looks at the chart, the history, the body in front of him, and refuses. Rusty is a bad candidate. The drug is not ready for a good one. Jefferies will not use him.

Maxwell waits until Jefferies is gone. One day is enough. He doses Rusty himself. When Jefferies comes back and finds out what was done behind his back, the argument does not stay an argument. They fight with their fists in the lab, two men who have already lost their wives and their funding and are now losing each other. Maxwell does not apologize. He says they needed a result. Jefferies says they needed a living subject.

The transformation takes Rusty. Then Rusty disappears. There is no body in the lab and no call from a hospital. Neither man can say whether Rusty died or walked out and kept walking. The not-knowing sits in the room with them. The drug did something. They cannot prove what.

Dinner

The pressure does not lift. Grants will not come back without a result the government can see, and the only result they have is a man who vanished. Maxwell, stressed past the point of sleeping, asks Jefferies over for dinner. It is framed as a truce. Jefferies comes because the work is still half his, and because he wants to know what Maxwell is hiding.

The water is laced. The wine is laced. The food is laced. Everything on the table carries the drug. Maxwell does not stop at a working dose. He gives Jefferies something like a quadruple dose, enough to force the change he could not force in the lab. Jefferies eats. He drinks. He does not know until it is already in him.

The change takes. It does not fail the way the others failed. Jefferies comes out the other side looking like a supermodel: the face, the body, the carriage of someone who would stop a room. He does not keep the old name. From here forward he is Stacy.

The price

Stacy does not thank him. She names two things and only two. She wants Maxwell dead for what he did, or she wants one hundred million dollars. Maxwell refuses both. He will not pay, and he will not die on her terms. He talks about the drug as if it is still theirs, then as if it is his. He moves to cut her out of the profits entirely.

That is the insult that finishes it. When she was Jefferies she did even more of the work than Maxwell. The notebooks, the failed batches, the nights that kept the drug alive — more of that was hers. He dosed her, remade her, and then reached for the money as if she had never been in the room.

Seventy-five stories

The climax is on a roof. Seventy-five stories up, Stacy and Maxwell fight in the open air. There is a gun. There is the drop. Maxwell is still trying to lock her out of every dollar the drug might make. Stacy is done negotiating. They wrestle to the edge.

Stacy is in high heels. She kicks him in the balls. His eyes roll back in his head. The gun leaves his hand. He is going over, and in the same second he grabs her. He does not save himself. He takes her with him. They go off the building together.

They fall. There is no last deal on the way down. Transformation ends with both of them dead on the street under seventy-five stories of glass, the drug still unfinished, Rusty still missing, and no one left to collect the money either of them wanted.

END OF TREATMENT

Transformation. Written as a story treatment from the author's outline: the failed drug, the dried-up grants, Rusty's disappearance, the dosed dinner, Stacy's demand, and the fall from the seventy-fifth story.