

DECONSTRUCTING VAL

by

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INT. CHILD VAL'S HOUSE - LIVING AREA - DAY

CHILD VAL, 8, awkward in his prepubescent queerness runs through the house on a mission.

INT. CHILD VAL'S HOUSE - BATHROOM

Val closes the door. Begins applying makeup in the mirror.

VAL AS THE HUNTER (V.O.)
She came to me when I was just a
boy. The makeup, attitude...

He flamboyantly wraps a scarf around his head.

VAL AS THE HUNTER (V.O.)
Beautiful clothes, they were all a
part of the show.

He puts his feet in his mother's shoes.

VAL AS THE HUNTER (V.O.)
All a part of becoming... her.

He opens his mouth wide as he looks in the mirror in full character.

VAL AS THE HUNTER (V.O.)
(breathy)
Val Brazil.

INT. SILVER FOX'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Val Brazil, now 30s, bursts out dressed in all the colors of an exotic, recycled tablecloth from the 80s. She dances with a clunky microphone up to her lips.

VAL AS THE CHARACTER
(sings)
I was lost in my universe
Flowers had no color
Even the sky was grey
Because I had no lover
(spins)
But you showed me that dreams come
true

VAL AS THE CHARACTER (CONT'D)	VAL AS THE HUNTER (V.O.)
(sings)	She was something that nobody
You showed me more colors	understood. And then... I met
than blue	you.
I feel so brand new	
It's good!	

SILVER FOX, 60s, debonair business type studies Val intensely from the couch.

VAL AS THE CHARACTER (CONT'D)	VAL AS THE HUNTER (V.O.)
(sings)	You didn't judge me, you
Blow my heart into pieces	believed my talent.
This must be what love is	
Blow my heart into pieces	

VAL AS THE CHARACTER (CONT'D)
 Yes, this... this is what love is!
 (finishes, poses)
 What do you think?

SUPER: THE CHARACTER

SILVER FOX
 I think I can make you a star.

VAL AS THE CHARACTER
 Oh, Silver Fox.

Val as the character falls awkwardly into his lap.

VAL AS THE CHARACTER (CONT'D)
 Are you being... honest?

SILVER FOX
 Of course, who could lie to a face
 like yours?

Val as the character spots a camera. Picks it up. Snaps a picture as she plants kiss after kiss.

Silver Fox dodges the last one. Stands, pushing her off.

SILVER FOX (CONT'D)
 This calls for a toast.

VAL AS THE CHARACTER
 Oh.

She smooths herself out. Sits waiting uncomfortably.

Silver Fox opens the liquor cabinet. Discreetly drops some powder into her glass without her seeing. Then more.

She joins him. He immediately hands her the glass.

SILVER FOX
To my colorful, little Empanada,
who's finally made it out of the
hut and is headed right for the
spotlight.

VAL AS THE CHARACTER
(dramatically)
Hut-- ?

SILVER FOX
(raises glass)
To Val Brazil!

VAL AS THE CHARACTER
(raises glass)
To my hero, my love. And to
America!

Their glasses clink together in cheers. The noise becomes...

INT. SILVER FOX'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Belt buckles coming undone. Her dress being ripped.

Val as the character opens her eyes in confusion as she is
thrust down onto a filthy mattress. She moans.

She blinks at the bright set lights as Silver Fox adjusts
them. Barely sees the shape of three other shirtless men.

SILVER FOX
Sleep my little empanada. And in
the morning, you'll be a star.

They come towards her. Yank off their belts. Flip her over
roughly. Silver Fox begins filming.

SILVER FOX (CONT'D)
And... action.

VAL AS HUNTER (V.O.)
(growls)
After that night, everyone knew the
name Val Brazil and she wasn't mine
anymore.

INT. THEATER - NIGHT

A bored improv group watches on as a disheveled Val as the character enters the spotlight in her deteriorated outfit.

VAL AS THE CHARACTER
Hello darlings, it is me, Val
Brazil.
(sings off key)
I was lost in my universe
Flower has no color
Even the sky was grey
(clears throat, gags)
Sorry.

GROUP LEAD, shaggy, wide-eyed, nods encouragingly as the rest of the IMPROVISORS look on blankly.

VAL AS THE CHARACTER (CONT'D)
You showed me that dreams come
true...

She grabs a chair. Tumbles down on top of it.

GROUP LEAD
(claps confused)
Okay. Good show, good show!
Everyone let's give them an
obligatory round of applause.

Other improvisers join in unenthusiastically as she pulls herself up.

VAL AS THE CHARACTER
Excuse me. I didn't finish.

GROUP LEAD
Yeah, you did. Let's give someone
else a chance.

VAL AS THE CHARACTER
This is my first time using a
chair. I will go again.

GROUP LEAD
No, you will get off the stage.

VAL AS THE CHARACTER
(voice cracking)
I was lost in my universe
Flowers had no color--

GROUP LEAD

Don't start again. You will get off the stage right now--

VAL AS THE CHARACTER

(sings)

Because I had no lover! Because I had no lover! Because I had no lover!

IMPROVISER #1

What the hell is wrong with you, man?

IMPROVISER #2

Come on, this is only night I could get a sitter and I just want to fucking improv.

IMPROVISER #3

Yeah, you suck!

VAL AS THE CHARACTER

(sings)

Blow my heart into pieces
This must be what love is
Blow my heart into pieces
(really gets into it)
Yes, this... this is what love is

GROUP LEAD

Alright, we're going to do this!

The group lead charges up on the stage at her. Val as the character pushes the chair in front of him.

GROUP LEAD (CONT'D)

We can do this the easy way or the hard way, it's your call.

He finally gets to her. Grabs her.

VAL

(singing guttural)

I feel so brand new
It's gooddddddd!

(choking)

I am Val Brazil and I am here to enchant you--

IMPROVISER #3

Get a life, loser.

IMPROVISER #4
Fuck Val Brazil!

IMPROVISER #5
(in sign language)
Fuck Val Brazil!

Out of breath, the group lead holds onto her.

GROUP LEAD
Maybe its time you hang up this
whole Val Brazil thing. It's
getting a little embarrassing,
don't you think?

VAL AS THE CHARACTER
But, what else can I be, if I'm not
her?

GROUP LEAD
Nobody?

A complete mess, she stands up defiantly, trying to keep her
dignity. Throws her bracelet off.

GROUP LEAD (CONT'D)
Please don't strip.

Val as the character finally walks out.

INT. THEATER - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Val rips off the character's costume. Scrubs off the makeup,
revealing a pitiful, almost unfamiliar man in the mirror.

VAL
A nobody.

His face quivers.

INT. VAL'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

CU: Val as the human, hairy, dirty, and all man, masturbates.

SUPER: THE HUMAN

VAL AS THE HUNTER (V.O.)
So, I became invisible, just like a
nobody does.

GUY (O.S.)
Should I start the clock?

His face contorts as he finishes. He turns to the side revealing the fast food filthy, roach's paradise that is his apartment.

VAL AS THE HUMAN

Now.

GUY, 20s, beefy cuddle buddy puts his arm around him.

VAL AS THE HUNTER (V.O.)

Tried to forget about Val Brazil.

Tried to forget about you.

GUY (O.S.)

How does that feel?

VAL AS THE HUMAN

It feels nice. Cuddly.

GUY

Good, I want you to be happy, babe.

Guy reacts as a wrapper rustles O.S.

GUY (CONT'D)

Are you eating that leftover burger from earlier?

VAL AS THE HUMAN

(mouth full)

You said you want me to be happy.

GUY

It's your time.

He swallows the bite. Indulges in it. Guy stands.

GUY (CONT'D)

Uh, no, I can't.

VAL AS THE HUMAN

What?

Val as the human turns. Shoves the wrapper under the pillow.

GUY

The way you live, it's disgusting.

And it's not just the apartment.

(throws things away)

You don't care about hygiene and hygiene is important to me--

VAL AS THE HUMAN

Maybe you should punish me.

GUY

I'm a lover, not a fighter, you know that. I just think that there are better things you can do with your day then just sit around smelling like cheese.

VAL AS THE HUMAN

That was from the burger.

GUY

You need to get your life together.
You need to--

Guy bends down to pick up more trash. Hesitates. Pulls up the cracked picture of Val as the character at Silver Fox's house.

GUY (CONT'D)

Wow, is that you?

VAL AS THE HUMAN

No.

Guy jumps in the bed. Faces it so they both can see.

GUY

Yeah, it is! Look at you, all done up. You were adorable. So, what, you had all kind of funny voices and makeup and stuff?

VAL AS THE HUMAN

I don't want to talk about it.

GUY

What's the big secret, who cares if you did drag? Show me something.

VAL AS THE HUMAN

No.

GUY

Come on.

VAL AS THE HUMAN

I said "no" and that is enough.

GUY

One line! I'm begging you,
pleeeeeeease--

Val as the human throws a towel on his head, wearing it like a wig.

VAL AS THE HUMAN
(Val Brazil voice)
Are you happy to see me now?

GUY
Oh god, that's great.

VAL AS THE HUMAN
Hello my darlings--

His eyes roll back as he goes back to that night.

FLASHBACK - SERIES OF SHOTS

Silver Fox stares at Val as the character from the couch.

SILVER FOX
I can make you a star.

She and Silver Fox clink glasses in cheers.

The shirtless men flip her over aggressively.

Val moans on the dirty mattress.

END FLASHBACK - SERIES OF SHOTS

INT. VAL'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - PRESENT DAY

Val as the human opens his eyes with a jolt. His face tenses.

VAL AS THE HUMAN
I will kill him!

GUY
Hey Val, take it easy. Are you
okay?

VAL AS THE HUMAN
(rips towel off head)
I told you, I can't do her anymore.
She's dead, you can't bring back
the dead.

GUY
You're talking about this Val
Brazil like she's a real person.

VAL AS THE HUMAN
She used to be.

GUY

Wait, I'm confused--

VAL AS THE HUMAN

I was so stupid. I thought it was love but it was all a game.

GUY

Sounds like an 80s pop song--

VAL AS THE HUMAN

He humiliated me! He took *her* from me. He should suffer like we suffered! He should know what's it like to be in her skin. To feel her pain.

GUY

(lighthearted)

Oh... This is this another character!

VAL AS THE HUMAN

Another... ?

GUY

So, how you going to do it? How you going to get revenge?

VAL AS THE HUMAN

(turning into Hunter)

I will shoot him. No, I will hunt him and then I will shoot him.

GUY

Nice.

(looks at beeping phone)

Times up. This cuddle bunny's got to bounce.

(stands)

But, good luck with the new character, babe, it sounds really intense.

(exaggerated face)

Scary. And don't forget the five star rating. See ya next week!

Guy leaves. Val as the human's eyes darken, a faint smile flickering.

VAL AS THE HUMAN

Another character.

INT. VAL'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Val as the human shaves his face. Puts dark makeup on. Puts on black combat boots.

VAL AS HUNTER (V.O.)
Another character.

EXT. SILVER FOX'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Val as the hunter with a drawn on mustache and all black everything on stares from behind a tree as a car pulls up.

SUPER: THE HUNTER

VAL AS THE HUNTER (V.O.)
So, I waited, the shadows
camouflaging the hunter from the
fox.

Silver Fox gets out of his car. Val as the hunter zeros in on him. He turns, looking in Val's direction, but he's gone.

VAL AS THE HUNTER (V.O.)
And I wondered...

INT. SILVER FOX'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Silver Fox sits, sipping a drink in the half-lit room. Over to Val as the hunter behind him in the hall.

VAL AS THE HUNTER (V.O.)
Did you ever think about me? Think
about how we met, the dream that it
was. You, a white Silver Fox
looking for a husband...

Val as the Hunter comes out with a club and quickly starts down the hallway.

VAL AS THE HUNTER (V.O.)
Me, a young Brazilian artist with a
dream, my heart wide open.

Silver Fox turns. Val as the hunter hits him over the head.

INT. SILVER FOX'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Silver Fox's vision goes in and out. His eyes narrow on Val the hunter.

VAL AS THE HUNTER (V.O.)
"Come to America", you said. "I'll
make all your dreams come true."
And now look what I've become.

VAL AS THE HUNTER
What *you've* become.

Silver Fox looks down at himself. He is dressed in Val the character's dress, his face painted with makeup. He struggles with the ties that bind his arms.

SILVER FOX
What is this, some kind of joke?

VAL AS THE HUNTER
Do you ever notice that movies
these days hardly have a happy
ending anymore?

Val as the hunter pulls the video camera up, ready to shoot.

SILVER FOX
Alright, fun's over. Untie me.

VAL AS THE HUNTER
You are not in control anymore!

SILVER FOX
What are you going to do? You think
you're going to put a camera on me
and get some kind of confession?
You should be thanking me. I made
you a star, just like I said.

VAL AS THE HUNTER
You made me nothing! But, now I am
somebody and you are *nobody*.
(comes closer)
Show me your terror face.

SILVER FOX
What?

VAL AS THE HUNTER
(shoves camera in face)
Show me your terror face!

Silver Fox nervously pulls on the ties again.

SILVER FOX
What do you want, money? I've got
money. I can give you a quarter of
the profits from the upload.

VAL AS THE HUNTER
I could use it to decorate my hut!

SILVER FOX
Well, I could get you a gig, a real
gig. I just have to call some
people--

VAL AS THE HUNTER
Story time is over for you. And...
action.

He straddles him. Takes the scarf from around his neck and wraps it around Silver Fox's face as the camera films it.

FLASH: Child Val puts makeup on. Throws scarf over his shoulder. Becoming Val the Character.

FLASH: Adult Val spinning around performing for Silver Fox.

Val as the Hunter pushes down harder. Suffocating him as he struggles.

FLASH: Child Val gasping in the mirror as she performs.

FLASH: Adult Val finishing her performance with a gesture.

Val as the hunter stands. Looks down at the lifeless Silver Fox as the character.

VAL AS THE HUNTER (CONT'D)
Sleep my little empenada... and in
the morning you'll be a star.

Val stands. Winks. Walks away as the hunter.

THE END