

BackTrack

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TITLE:

BackTrack

INT. NATASMAI'S APARTMENT

James Astor, late 20's, is standing in the kitchen with his girlfriend Natasmai. A burnt filet mignon sits in the frying pan beside them.

JAMES

Love you, hon.

NATASMAI cradles JAMES' hand, giving a crooked smile.

NATASMAI

Uoy llik lliw I.

JAMES smiles with a look of unconditional love.

JAMES

What would you like for dinner, hon? I've got leftover pasta, or we can order takeout Chinese

NATASMAI

Rettalp a no daeh ruoy tnaw I.

JAMES

Okay honey boop, Chinese it is.

JAMES walks to the adjoining room to make the phone call. NATASMAI gazes at him with a scientific sort of gaze.

A KNOCK at the front door. JAMES answers it, while NATASMAI inspects a kitchen knife.

JAMES calls from the other room inaudibly. NATASMAI inches closer to hear him.

JAMES

Honey, could you grab me four dollars for the tip?

NATASMAI

Regnol hcum ti deen t'now ouy.

NATASMAI hands JAMES four dollars and walks back to the kitchen.

CHINESE DELIVERY MAN

Why won't you need it much longer?

JAMES

Huh? Need what?

CHINESE DELIVERY MAN

Your girl. She said you won't need the money much longer.

JAMES looks flummoxed.

JAMES

What do you mean?

CHINESE DELIVERY MAN clasps his hand on the dollar bills.

CHINESE DELIVERY MAN

I listen to a lot of music backwards. It's called backmasking. She sounds like a backmasker.

JAMES

Are you sure?

CHINESE DELIVERY MAN

Absolutely. Record her talking, then put it into music backmasker dot com.

CHINESE DELIVERY MAN puts the dollars in his pocket.

CHINESE DELIVERY MAN

Thanks for the tip.

JAMES

You too.

CUT TO JAMES and NATASMAI sitting at a table eating. JAMES just sits there, staring at her. Her voice is inaudible. He films her as she speaks.

INT. NATASMAI'S LIVING ROOM. NIGHT.

JAMES inputs the words he recorded NATASMAI saying earlier. He sees various iterations of "I'm planning to kill you". In one clip he recorded, she kisses him right after saying she is going to kill him. He stares at the screen, replaying the kiss three times.

CUT to JAMES tucking NATASMAI into her bed.

JAMES

See you tomorrow morning, Natasmai.

NATASMAI

Evil ouy fi.

JAMES gives a devilish grin.

JAMES

Ouy dnatsrednu I.

NATASMAI looks utterly shocked, her face blank and pale.

JAMES slips out his travel bag, pre-packed with his belongings, and skips out.

EXT. CITY STREET, NIGHT

JAMES (V.O.)

I never told her how much I had heard her say in reverse. It was enough. I had many recordings of her speaking in her cute backwards language. Unfortunately, when I ran it through the website, I learned that she'd been plotting my demise for many months. She derived a sort of satisfaction from planning in plain sight. Thank you, random Chinese delivery man, I owe you my life.

End

(Production note: Backwards dialogue will be in subtitles, and will rearrange to normal order when James says "I understand you" backwards)

