

The background of the cover is a dark, moody illustration. In the upper right, a snowflake-shaped pendant hangs from a dark cord. Below it, a white, multi-story building is visible in the distance. The lower half of the cover is dominated by the interior of a car, with a bright orange glow emanating from the dashboard and door area. The title 'Snowflake Obsidian' is written in a large, white, stylized font across the center.

Snowflake Obsidian

Written by Jeffrey Gold

SNOWFLAKE OBSIDIAN

by

Jeffrey Gold

Jeffrey Gold
(213) 787-6077
jgold@jeffreygold.com

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EXT. TWO-LANE HIGHWAY - RETRO FUTURE - DUSK

A lone, rusty Volkswagen speeds along.

A fulvous sky is punctured by the faint glow of a sepia medallion loitering above the horizon.

EXT. STATELY HOUSE - MUCH LATER

The Volkswagen pulls up to a stately victorian house situated on a farmstead.

It stops on the crunchy pebble driveway in front of the house.

The front door of the house is invitingly open, the interior glowing warm against the ruddy twilight.

A few people are loitering in the foyer.

Someone notices the car in front and disappears to the inside of the house.

Soon after, a matronly WOMAN (61) comes down the steps to greet the new arrival.

JAXAN (35), a rugged loner who looks like a cosmopolitan lumberjack, steps out of the vehicle.

She quickly embraces Jaxan, then ushers him into...

INT. STATELY HOME - CONTINUOUS

...where people are mingling in small islands in the corridors and rooms.

People are in formal dress, engaged in casual conversation, some nibbling appetizers, but the gathering has the funereal languor of a wake.

JAXAN and the WOMAN enter the large, refined main living room area, where AUGUST (17) is seated center on the couch.

Although pretty girls are all around him deeply engaged in conversation, none are paying him any attention.

His face belies any celebration.

He looks up and recognizes the visitor—his face attempting a smile more out of recognition than delight.

He gets up and weakly ambles over.

CUT TO:

EXT. STATELY HOME - MOMENTS LATER

A few people are gathered in front of the house to witness the departure.

The Woman, clearly August's mother, clutches him, and with tears in her eyes, profusely kisses him as if he was going away forever.

She hugs Jaxan with sincere appreciation, wiping away tears as the two get into the VW bug.

As it pulls away, the Woman turns to an older man standing nearby for consolation.

EXT. HIGHWAY - LATER

The pair drive down a lonely highway.

INT. VW - LATER

JAXAN
Want some music?

Jaxan reaches to the radio, but stops...

AUGUST
Why do you think Mom picked you to drive me? You're never around.

JAXAN
Smoke?

AUGUST
Sure.

August pulls a cigarette from the pack.

JAXAN
I don't know.
(beat)
Mom says you gave all your stuff to the Schottky kids down the road?

AUGUST
What happens if you don't drop me off?

JAXAN
They'll look for you.

AUGUST
How come you never got picked?

JAXAN
That's how lotteries work.

AUGUST
It's not fair.

JAXAN
Are you gonna smoke it, or are you
just gonna fuck around with it?

Jaxan reaches over and grabs the cigarette from his mouth.

AUGUST
I hate cigarettes.

JAXAN
You were always such a pussy.

Crumples it and throws it out the window.

AUGUST
Can't you just drop me off in the
desert?

JAXAN
Don't be stupid.

A long beat as they drive a ways...

AUGUST
Where do we go after?

JAXAN
I don't think there is an after.

AUGUST
Mom says there's an after.

Jaxan looks at him.

JAXAN
She said that?

AUGUST
Yeah.

JAXAN
Well, Mom is wrong. Like she is
about a lot of things.

August looks out the window, barely engaging in the passing scenery.

They drive on.

Jaxan keeps switching stations. Oldies: Sinatra. Diamond. Streisand.

EXT. LONELY DESERT HIGHWAY - DUSK

The VW scampers across the desert like a determined insect.

MOS montage of the drive.

INT. VW - LATER

August is resting his head on the seat, still looking out the window...avoiding conversation.

JAXAN
Grab a bite?

August slowly sits up.

A faint light appears in the distance.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

The pair strolls into an empty diner: the place is dead.

They slide into some seats.

Pretending to be obnoxious customers...

JAXAN
Can we get some service around here?

AUGUST
Yeah, like, can we get some ser...

Cassandra (29), pretty in a girl-next-door way, turns a corner, chewing gum.

CASSANDRA
What'll you boys be havin'?

JAXAN
This is August. We're taking him to Amaranth.

She immediately reacts, as if someone turned down the temperature, and touches the teardrop-shaped snowflake obsidian pendant nestled in her cleavage.

CASSANDRA
(nervous, but hiding
it well)
How 'bout some coffee on me?

JAXAN
Sounds good.

CASSANDRA
Want somethin' to eat?

JAXAN
You want something?

AUGUST
Let me look.

JAXAN
(flashing a smile)
Give us five.

She turns.

CASSANDRA
Two coffees coming right up.

A beat.

JAXAN
What do you think?

AUGUST
'Bout what?

JAXAN
The waitress.

AUGUST
She's hot.

He laughs.

AUGUST (CONT'D)
What? You don't think she's hot?

JAXAN
Yeah. She's hot.

August is engrossed in the menu.

JAXAN (CONT'D)
You blushing?

AUGUST

No.
 (beat)
Got a quarter?

Jaxan reaches into his pocket and pulls out a loose assortment of coins and spills them on the table.

AUGUST (CONT'D)

Thanks.

August guides a quarter to the edge of the table and flips through the table jukebox and settles on a choice...punches in the buttons.

The music starts: Carpenters.

Cassandra returns with the coffees.

CASSANDRA

That's one of my faves.

She places the two coffees, and slides in next to August.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

What else you like?

August flips through the jukebox and lands on one, points.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

You got good taste.
 (looking at Jaxan)
Can't say that about everybody.

She slides back out and smooths out her apron.

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Tell you what, August: you pick my favorite song, I'll give you a treat.

 (beat)
You boys decide on what you want?

AUGUST

I'll have the chicken-fried steak.

CASSANDRA

You?

JAXAN

Make that a double.

CASSANDRA

Mashed potatoes or fries?

AUGUST

Fries.

JAXAN

I'll take mash.

CASSANDRA

Coming right up.

She leaves.

August leans in, conspiratorially...

AUGUST

What d'you think her favorite song
is?

JAXAN

How would I know? From the looks of
it, you two are simpatico.

AUGUST

What does that mean?

JAXAN

Simpatico? Hmm...like two peas in a
pod.

August grimaces—doesn't believe him.

He turns back to the jukebox; flips through it.

Time passes. MOS sequence.

They have finished eating.

Cassandra arrives with a refill for Jaxan.

CASSANDRA

Did you pick out my favorite song
yet?

AUGUST

No.

CASSANDRA

It's kind of like the one you played
'before'.

She winks at Jaxan, then walks away.

AUGUST

You think it's another Karen
Carpenter song?

JAXAN

She essentially told you what it is.

He flips through the jukebox furiously.

AUGUST

There's like eleven Carpenter songs
in here.

Jaxan laughs.

JAXAN

She gave you the answer.

AUGUST

No, she didn't.

JAXAN

Think about it.

AUGUST

She said it was like the one before.

JAXAN

Bingo!

AUGUST

I don't get it.

JAXAN

B 4.

(beat)

Look it up. What does it say?

Jaxan leans, now interested too.

AUGUST

"For all we know."

Cassandra reappears.

CASSANDRA

Carpenters again. Play it.

August takes a ready quarter from Jaxan and slides it into
the slot and carefully chooses B and 4.

August turns his head, and presents a generous smile.

Jaxan knocks a single cigarette from his pack, puts it in
his mouth.

Cassandra reaches out her hand...

CASSANDRA (CONT'D)

Come on, cutie.

August looks over to Jaxan, seeking permission.

Jaxan pulls the unlit cigarette from his lips, glares at him with a 'are-you-fucking-crazy?' look on his face.

Cassandra leads August to a clear section of floor, pulls him in for a slow dance.

August slowly eases into the rhythm.

After a while, August looks over at Jaxan—he's disappeared.

Cassandra, seeing how affectionate August is, holds him a bit tighter.

EXT. DINER - CONTINUOUS

The music can be faintly heard outside.

Jaxan sits on the hood of his car, smoking a cigarette...looking on.

He flashes a brief, disbelieving smile before taking another drag.

INT. DINER - LATER

Their dance has slowed a bit...gotten a bit more intimate.

Cassandra leads August out of view.

EXT. SIDE OF DINER - LATER

At the back of the building, the short order cook emerges to take a break.

He walks over to his truck, sits in it, and turns on his radio, leaving the cab door open.

EXT. DINER - LATER

Jaxan is leaned up against the car.

August emerges and hurriedly walks right to the passenger side of the car and gets in.

As if awakened...

JAXAN

That's a little fast, isn't it?

August sits motionless in the car--arms folded in a huff.

Concerned, Jaxan launches toward the diner, roughly swinging the door open.

He briskly walks up to Cassandra, but can't see her face while she is looking down at the cash register.

JAXAN (CONT'D)

What happened?

CASSANDRA

He's a sweet boy.

A beat.

JAXAN

How much do I owe you?

CASSANDRA

\$21.24

He hands her a twenty and a five.

She takes the money and gingerly presses some buttons on the register.

She prepares to make change.

JAXAN

Keep it.

He slides three Benjamins her way.

She glances over at the money.

CASSANDRA

No.

She finally looks up...tears and mascara are streaming down her face.

Disappointed, perhaps more with himself, Jaxan takes back the Benjamins and slides them back in his pocket.

JAXAN

(feeble)

Bye.

As he makes his way to the door...there are words on her lips that can't escape.

EXT. DINER - CONTINUOUS

Jaxan gets into the car, starts it, and peels out of there.
They hit the open road.

INT. VW - CONTINUOUS

JAXAN
You okay?

AUGUST
I don't want to talk about it.

JAXAN
It's not a big deal.

AUGUST
It is a big deal.

JAXAN
Okay. It's a big deal.

A surreptitious smile.

They drive a ways in silence.

AUGUST
I couldn't do it.

JAXAN
Why not? You had your chance.

AUGUST
I know.

JAXAN
So, what was the problem?

AUGUST
I couldn't get a... you know...

JAXAN
Why not?

AUGUST
You wouldn't know.

A long delay. Finally...

AUGUST (CONT'D)
I was scared.

JAXAN
Scared? Scared of what?

AUGUST
She was beautiful.

JAXAN
Oh.

Jaxan smiles a knowing smile.

They drive a ways.

JAXAN (CONT'D)
It happens.

AUGUST
Did it ever happen to you?

JAXAN
All the time.

AUGUST
Even with beautiful girls?

JAXAN
Yeah, them too.

INT. VW - LATER

Bored with the landscape flashing by, August surveys the interior of the car.

August notices a snowflake obsidian pendant hanging from the rear view mirror.

He slowly look over at Jaxan, who is focused on the drive.

When it finally registers....

AUGUST
Stop the car!

JAXAN
Why?

AUGUST
Stop the car!

JAXAN
What for?

AUGUST
I gotta pee.

JAXAN
Why didn't you say so?

He abruptly slows the car, skidding.

August bolts from the car, and launches into the open desert.

Jaxan calmly gets out and follows him, but walking.

August continues to run, panting, out of breath.

In front of August is the wide horizon of everything and nothing.

Nowhere to go in every direction, he slows.

Stops.

Bends over, grabs his knees to catch his breath.

In the far distance, Jaxan can be seen slowly winding his way toward him.

EXT. MIDDLE OF DESERT, FAR OFF THE HIGHWAY - LATER

Jaxan approaches...the car a tiny speck in the background.

He slows.

Looks around...takes in the morning desert. Then...

JAXAN
You wanna drive back?
(beatlet)
We can drive back.

AUGUST
No.

JAXAN
Then, what do you want me to do?

AUGUST
(desperation)
There's nothing that can be done
now. It's too late.

JAXAN
We can go back.

A beat.

JAXAN (CONT'D)

She liked you.
(beatlet)
Liked you a lot.

AUGUST

Yeah, but she doesn't love me.

JAXAN

How do you know?
(beat)
Let's take you back.

Jaxan grabs him by the arm; August twists and pulls away.

AUGUST

No.
(beat)
You set me up.

Faking disbelief convincingly...

JAXAN

What? What are you talking about?

AUGUST

You don't think I know.
(beatlet)
Think I'm stupid?

Jaxan is stunned.

AUGUST (CONT'D)

Think I'm stupid because I don't
know what simptopico means?

JAXAN

You mean simpatico?

AUGUST

Yeah.

August charges at Jaxan, attacking him.

Jaxan lets him take out his fury--taking the punches.

August continues flailing at Jaxan, but starts crying.

Jaxan tries to hug him, out of love and self-preservation.

August struggles, trying to wriggle his way out of Jaxan's
embrace...pushes Jaxan away.

August falls to the ground.

AUGUST (CONT'D)

Ow.

(beat, incredulous)

Why'd you push me?

(beat)

God!

He scrambles back up and immediately charges at Jaxan, pummeling him again.

AUGUST (CONT'D)

You never looked out for me before!

August pulls back, then charges at him again.

The impact causes them both to fall.

On the ground, Jaxan rolls him, pinning him down.

August is crying/screaming.

AUGUST (CONT'D)

You never looked out for me!

(beat)

You were never there!

Jaxan slaps him.

August cries out even more. Primal. Like a squealing pig.

After assessing what he has done, Jaxan reaches in to embrace him.

AUGUST (CONT'D)

(quietly)

Never looked out for me.

Jaxan cradles him as August blubbers like a baby, snot bubbling out of his nostrils and running down his lips.

AUGUST (CONT'D)

Now it's too late.

Jaxan is unable to respond...all he can do is hold him...hold him tighter.

AUGUST (CONT'D)

(softly)

Too late.

His cries dissolve into the desert air.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. VW BUG - LATER (MOS)

They are driving again...in silence.

August is looking out at the passing scenery.

Jaxan reaches out, grabbing him by the neck, rocking him gently.

August tries to suppress a smile.

LONG DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. AMARANTH - LATER

Something shapeless looms out of focus in the distance.

On the passenger side, they embrace for the last time.

Jaxan holds him tight, but August slips away too easily.

August starts his somber march toward Amaranth.

It is a formidable edifice.

Amaranth looks sinister and utilitarian...part castle, part factory with gray smoke rising from four chimney turrets.

Thirty feet away, August slows, then stops.

He looks ahead, takes it in...unsure...looks down. Then...

...looks back one last time at Jaxan and gives him a sad smile.

He continues walking toward the charcoal edifice.

Jaxan is frozen in place, holding onto the passenger door, watching August's slow progress.

If he wasn't so damn stoic, a tear might be rolling down his cheek.

August eventually walks into the threshold, dissolving into a dark arch...never to be seen again.

FADE OUT.