

'Nocturnal'

by

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FADE IN:

INT. TRAIN/BUS STATION - DAY

EDDIE (19), wearing a college sweatshirt, sitting alone on a bench, buried in his phone flipping through old family photos while waiting for his bus home to board and leave. after a few minutes, he calls his dad and leaves a voicemail.

EDDIE
Hey dad, it's me, I was just
calling to let you know I'm on my
way home. See you in a few.

After leaving the voicemail, He calls his GRANDMA, she answers after a couple rings.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
Hey grandma.

GRANDMA
Hello sweetheart. How are you?

EDDIE
I'm good, just waiting on the bus.
I was calling to see if you guys
were still coming over Thursday?

GRANDMA
Of course the family will be
there. You sure you don't want us
to bring anything?

EDDIE
No, it's okay me and dad got it.

Before his grandma has a chance to respond, an ANNOUNCEMENT is being made in the background indicating Eddie's bus is about to depart.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
Oh my bus is boarding now, I gotta
go. Love you and see you soon.

GRANDMA
Okay, love you too sweetheart.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF EDDIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Eddie grabs his suitcase out of the trunk of the Uber and walks up to his house slightly excited to be back and see his father.

INT. EDDIE'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Eddie walks into the house and briefly looks around for his father while putting his suitcase down.

EDDIE
Hello! Dad, you home?

Eddie waits a couple seconds and there's no response. He walks into his Dad's home office and finds him buried in his work.

CHARLES (49), wearing dress pants and a button up shirt, that has been recently untucked, looks up with a tired look. He forces a smile when he sees Eddie.

CHARLES
Hey kiddo! how've you been? How's college treating you?

EDDIE
I've been good, thing's aren't too bad, this will be a much needed break. How've you been holding up?

CHARLES
I've just been keeping busy with work. I um ordered pizza for dinner, it's in the kitchen.

EDDIE
Okay, sounds good, i'm going to get settled and come back down.

As Eddie exits the room, the camera FOCUSES on a family portrait in the distance.

INT. THE KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Eddie and Charles are sitting in the kitchen on opposite ends of the table. They're eating their pizza in a slightly uncomfortable silence before Eddie breaks it.

EDDIE
So, um, I was thinking about this Thursday, have you made any plans?

Charles makes a look that's between sadness and discomfort.

CHARLES
Uh, no, I haven't really thought about it.

EDDIE

Well, that's what I thought. I don't want a repeat of last year so I talked to grandma and invited the family over.

CHARLES

Are they bringing the food?

EDDIE

See, about that... I kind of told them that we would be preparing dinner.

Charles drops his head angrily and shakes it disapprovingly.

CHARLES

Eddie, we're not cooking dinner for the whole family, that's ridiculous.

EDDIE

I know, I know! I've thought about it and I don't want us to lose a tradition due to circumstances. We still have each other and have family and I don't want that to be lost, it's been 2 years don't you think it's time to move forward? Remember last year around the holidays?

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Charles and Eddie are sitting on the couch sad and distant as they're eating a microwave dinner and watching the Thanksgiving football game.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

It's Christmas day, the two exchange gifts in silence, there's not Christmas tree or decorations, the only indication that it's Christmas is by the CHRISTMAS HAT Eddie is wearing.

END FLASHBACK

Charles takes a deep breath and contemplates his answer before responding. Eddie has a hopeful look on his face.

CHARLES

I'm not going to sit here and argue with you. If you feel like you can make a big family dinner by all means go for it. If you've got it all figured out you can do it yourself.

Charles gets up, throws his food away, and exits the kitchen.

Eddie is still sitting in the kitchen trying not to look too defeated that his father is unwilling to help.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Charles is sitting at the table reading a newspaper and drinking coffee when Eddie walks in.

EDDIE

Good morning dad.

CHARLES

Morning Eddie.

Eddie pours milk and cereal in a bowl and goes to sit across from his father.

EDDIE

Um, I'm going grocery shopping today? Wanna join?

CHARLES

(still buried in the newspaper)

No, I have work to do. The keys here are the car keys.

Charles slides the keys across the table. Eddie grabs them disappointed.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Eddie is standing inside of the store with a cart full of groceries. Eddie is flipping through pages of recipes that his mother used, lowkey overwhelmed but slightly eager.

EDDIE (V.O.)

How can I get dad to want to help? What's something he loved that mother made?

Then, as if a light bulb above his head had turned on, Eddie heads towards the apples.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

It's 9 AM, Eddie is standing at one end of the table with the food and recipes spread out across the table for him to prepare.

EDDIE (V.O.)
Okay, no big deal you got this.
The turkey will take longer,
right? so maybe I should start
with that.

Eddie goes to preheat the oven, he then grabs the turkey hesitantly and starts to prepare the dinner.

Charles walks in the kitchen to place his coffee cup into the sink, he briefly observes what Eddie is doing.

EDDIE
Hey, wanna help me cu-

CHARLES
(interjecting)
Eddie, we already talked about
this.

Once the turkey is in the oven, Eddie moves on to other things to cook.

Montage

- Cutting up vegetables
- putting water in a pot to boil
- Checking the turkey in the oven
- Stirring things in a pot
- Looking over recipes

End Montage

While everything else is cooking, Eddie decides to tackle mom's apple pie. He starts by making the dough, which proves to be harder than he expected, he begins to become slightly frustrated.

EDDIE
(determined)
No, no, no! I'm not giving up,
this pie has to be perfect.

Eddie reads the recipe aloud as he mixes the ingredients together. This time, instead of being a crumbled mess, the pie crust actually rolls out smoothly. Eddie gives off a slight smirk as he looks towards the sky, he's starting to become hopeful that the evening just might go smoothly.

An hour later, Eddie is sitting at the table with a bowl filled with the apple filling for the apple pie. Eddie frustratingly glazes over the handwritten recipe of his mother.

EDDIE (CONT'D)
This doesn't taste like mom's what
am I missing!

Charles enters the kitchen again, observing Eddie's frustration.

CHARLES
Trying your hand at mom's apple
pie huh?

EDDIE
Yeah, but no matter what I try it
doesn't taste the same.

Eddie, no longer happy and hopeful, is visibly frustrated with his father and with the apple pies not working.

CHARLES
Look, Eddie, making this pies
isn't going to bring her back.
Making all this food isn't going
to bring her back!

EDDIE
Why can't you just be supportive
of me just this one time!

CHARLES
You don't get it. Losing your
mother was the hardest thing I've
ever had to go through. I was your
age when I met her, I knew then
that she was the love of my life.
We'd been through so much together
that when she died, I didn't know
how to deal with it.. I still
don't.

(MORE)

CHARLES (CONT'D)

I love you Eddie, I do, but it's
so hard when you remind me of her
so much.

Charles and Eddie stand in silence for a dew seconds.

EDDIE

I.. I know this won't bring her
back.. I.. I guess I just thought
it would be nice for once to
remember her somehow in a positive
way. I guess I just thought making
this dinner and bringing the
family back together, would help
us deal with the holiday seasons.
I'm tired of being sad about
losing mom.

CHARLES

(sighs)

Son-

Before Charles can finish his sentence, The SMOKE DETECTOR
SOUNDS, they panic, open the oven to the turkey burned and
the food on the stovetop over cooked.

CHARLES (CONT'D)

SHIT! SHIT! SHIT!

As his plan falls apart before his eyes, Eddie just stands
there stuck. He had so much hope and wanted things to go
perfectly, but now everything is ruined.

EDDIE

Dad.. I'm sorry. I just wanted
everything to be perfect, I wanted
you to be happy. I know this
hasn't been very easy on you, and
it hasn't for me either.. but I
just wanted things to work out..
at least this time.

After putting out the smoke and diffusing the situation,
Charles walks over to Eddie and gives him a hug.

CHARLES

I know son, I know.

While hugging his son, Charles looks at the pies, suddenly
he makes a face as if he's just made the greatest discovery
ever. He looks up to the sky with a slight and hopeful
smirk.

Charles abruptly lets go of his son and goes searching the cabinets and drawers. Eddie is confused.

EDDIE
Um, Dad? What are you looking for?

CHARLES
(to himself)
Where is it? Where is it!

EDDIE
Dad?

CHARLES
Your mother had this homemade
spice mixture that she used in all
of her baking.

Eddie regains hope and begins to help his dad look around for the secret spice mix.

CHARLES (CONT'D)
Ah! I got it!

Charles and Eddie go over to the apple pie mixture, and sprinkle in the secret ingredient. Eddie stirs the mixture some.

Eddie takes a spoon and samples the mixture. A huge grin starts to form on his face. For the first time since Eddie's been home, Charles has a smile on his face as he hugs his son from the side.

EDDIE
Well, even if the rest of dinner
is ruined, at least we got the pie
right.

They put the pie in the oven and both share a sigh of relief. Then the realization that they have nothing for dinner hits them. A message pops up on Eddie's phone

AUNT AMY
(Text)
We'll be there around 6:30 sweetie

EDDIE
So, what are we going to do about
dinner?

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - AN HOUR LATER

Charles and Eddie are setting up the table with plates and silverware for the evening. The Chinese takeout is beautifully placed on the table as if it's a homemade feast.

The one thing they got right, Mom's Pie, is sitting at the center of the table.

CHARLES

Well, that's as good as it's going to get for now.

EDDIE

It may not be much, but hey at least it's something.

The DOORBELL RINGS. Charles gives Eddie a side hug and pat on the back before they head to the door to answer it. Charles looks up and smiles at the ceiling. Eddie has a smile on his face.

CHARLES

Welp, here goes nothing.

EDDIE

Happy Thanksgiving, Dad.

They walk to the door and open it to find the family waiting outside.

FADE OUT: