

A Reminiscence

By

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EXT. SOMEWHERE

It's black. We can hear the wind.

TWO FACES appear. The only things lighted in the black.

A
You disrespect me.

B
No I don't.

A
Yes, you do. Every time I call, you
keep me waiting. You can never,
never, give me five minutes of your
time.

B
Okay.

A
Will you just shut up?

B
All I said was -

A
Please.

B
I was just acknowledging what you
were saying!

A
Just please let me talk-

B
And anyway, it's not like I was
trying to disrespect you. You know
I wouldn't consciously try to-

A
JUST SHUT UP.

The faces separate, floating around the viewer. They bob and move naturally, attached to an unseen body. We hear a clatter as one character stumbles. The black follows them like pulling apart curtains to let the light of a window in. The light is startling and we can see it's opening to a blue sky. The faces fade as the sky takes over the scene.

The wind turns into the sound of a jet engine. A JET ENGINE comes into sight. We are under an airplane wing. We can see the distant ground pass below us.

EXT. - UNDER PLANE WING - DAY

B

(V.O)

Remember when we went to get those
massages together?

A

What?

B

I said remember when we went to get
those massages together?

A

What?

The engine noise is reduced to staticky phone noise.

B

(loud, but incomprehensible)

Remember when we went to get those
massages together?

A

What?? Goddamn it, I can never hear
you. It's like you have a cotton
ball permanently taped over your
mouth!

We pass through a cloud.

The engine roars again, deafening this time.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. - SMALL MESSAGE ROOM - MORNING

It's dim. Ambient sounds play from a small speaker behind the viewer. On either side of the viewer is a massage table. Each one is occupied by a character lying face down, towels covering them.

A

(muffled, through the
apparatus holding their head)

Ugh. We shouldn't have come late.

(CONTINUED)

B

I know. But it wasn't entirely our fault. It was that traffic on the way here...

A

Yeah, but then we got here and took our damn time in the parking lot. Why did we do that?

B

I don't know.

A

I really hope they don't cut our time short. I need to get this knot out of my shoulder.

B

I'm gonna be so pissed if they don't give us the full hour -

Two massage therapists walk in from a door on the left. We can call them JANET and SAUL. They seem a bit rushed as they greet the patrons and softly direct them to get into positions in which they can begin working. They glop lotion on their hands and start massaging.

SAUL

(to his patron)

Make sure to let me know if you want more or less pressure.

It's quiet for a moment as we watch and listen to the sticky, moist sounds of lotion on skin, some deep breathing, and the soft ambient sounds coming from the speakers.

JANET

By the way, I don't know if they told you but I hope it's okay that we can't give you the full hour.

A and B agree to this in their own way, outwardly pleasant and masking annoyance.

We watch and hear the therapists at work. We just exist in the space, listening to the sounds, viewing whatever we please.

Then, we see the two therapists stand up to walk around the table. From the viewer's perspective, it looks that they are mirroring each other. They aren't necessarily touching their patrons in that moment, but we can still hear the goopy sounds of lotion on skin.

(CONTINUED)

We transition into a moment of which the patrons are unaware. Everything is the same except suddenly the therapists' movements are big and theatrical.

Their walk around the table turns into a graceful sashay, one finger trailing their patrons back, mirroring each other, in sync.

It's not sexual, but you can feel the heat and passion emanating from the therapists' bodies. It's like they are carrying out some ritual to infuse the patrons with intense, warm feelings that soothe and empower. It should look absurd.

The characters explore the entire space, jumping on the tables, or dancing if the space allows.

Throughout this, no words are said. Only diegetic sounds of the bodies moving, the ambient noises, and any sharp or deep breathing. Gloopy sounds also persist in the background.

Eventually, the therapists return to reality. After some final motions, they get up to leave.

JANET

Thanks for coming. Once we leave,
you can get dressed. Make sure to
grab all your jewelry and
accessories and leave the door open
on the way out.

The four exchange thanks and pleasantries and the therapists leave. As they pull the door open we

FADE TO:

INT. - CAFE - LATER MORNING

The fade rolls from the open door across the whole scene until we are in a small cafe. A few cheap paintings brighten up otherwise bland white walls. Nothing fancy or special about this place. Inexpensive food though.

The viewer is situated in the middle of the cafe. A and B are sitting off to the right. We can see them more clearly now. They are in their late 20s.

At a table, somewhat behind the viewer towards the window, an ELDERLY MAN sits with a YOUNG WOMAN.

In front of the viewer, a line starts to form at the counter as people come in to get brunch. It's a constant bustle from beginning to end of the scene.

(CONTINUED)

Pages 5-20 omitted

-----ACT II-----

EXT. - PARK SQUARE - DAY

It's a crisp, foggy, weekday morning. Character B leans against a statue of St. Jude in the center of the square. They have headphones in. It's their lunch break.

The viewer is about 10 feet away directly in front of B.

A spritely CHAPERONE leads a group of YOUNG STUDETNS down the sidewalk. The kids are holding hands and wearing reflective vests that are too big for them.

The group stops at the statue.

CHAPERONE

And this is the statue of Saint
Jude. He is the patron saint of
lost causes.

The children could care less. B watches them amused and takes out an earbud.

B

What are you guys doing today?

CHAPERONE

We are taking a tour of our park
today! There are lots of cool
statues and things to learn here.
Right kids?

They're distracted.

CHAPERONE

(to statue, for effect)
St. Jude, please send help.

B

Good idea. You're especially gonna
need it when you get to the
playground.

The STUDENTS perk up at the word playground.

CHAPERONE

(good spirited)
Thanks for that, guy...
(to kids)
C'mon everyone. We'll get to the
playground soon. That's at the end
of the tour.

(CONTINUED)

Audible sounds of disappointment are heard. They start walking. B plugs their headphones back in and continues eating. Whenever the viewer looks at B, we can hear their music playing through the headphones.

DANNY and LANE are two kids at the back of the line. They start to get aggravated with each other. They are unusually eloquent and perceptive.

LANE

Danny, sometimes I just want to strangle you. You're so annoying.

DANNY

Me?

LANE

Yes, you idiot, who else would I be talking to?

DANNY

Yeah? Well sometimes I want to grab you by the shoulders and just shake you because you are so frustrating.

LANE

Oh yeah? When? Name one time when you wanted to do that.

DANNY

I don't know. I can't remember. But I know I've felt it before. I kinda want to right now.

LANE

Then do it! Why haven't you done it yet?

DANNY

'Cause you'll just tell on me, and I'll get in trouble even though I know you are itching to do the same thing to me!

LANE

No I wouldn't actually do it.

DANNY

That's baloney. Yes you would!

LANE

I don't actually want to hurt you. But I know you do.

(CONTINUED)

DANNY

What?? No I don't!

LANE

Well, I don't know that.

DANNY

Yes you do! I have never done that to...okay, you know what? just go. I don't want to talk about it anymore.

LANE

Really? Because earlier you were saying that you wanted to fix things.

DANNY

(extremely exasperated)

Oh my gosh. Whatever, Lane.

He walks off to follow the group. Lane lingers before following.

A GROUNDSKEEPER approaches where the two kids just were. He grabs his tools and tries to clean some indelible stain on the ground. He does this for the rest of the scene.

B takes a call. It's from A. He heads back to the office.

EXT. - PARK SQUARE - SIMULTANEOUS

FERN and GEORGE, a couple in their late 60s, sits on a swing bench somewhere within the viewer's line of sight. Despite sitting next to each other, they are sitting in isolation.

They sit quietly for a while, swinging softly back and forth, the hinges of the bench squealing away.

FERN

I'm bored.

GEORGE

Why?

FERN

(with heavy realization)

I squandered my life away being with you.

(CONTINUED)

GEORGE

That's rude. Was the wedding and honeymoon not good enough for you either?

FERN

Really, George? Do you want me to give you a gold star for doing the absolute minimum for me?

GEORGE is silent.

FERN

When did you stop trying?

GEORGE

Well, if I was so bad to you, why didn't you leave me sooner?

FERN

Oh my God, George. Of course. It's my fault. When I call and I can't reach you, it's my fault for calling at an inconvenient time. It's my fault for feeling like you never really cared about me or our relationship. It's my fault that one of our kids is fucking retarded!

Some passerbys look over at the outburst.

GEORGE

(timidly)

I never said any of that.

FERN

Of course you didn't. And of course, I still haven't gotten an answer to my question. When did you stop trying?

GEORGE

I-

FERN

And don't fucking say you didn't.

He has to rethink his words.

GEORGE

I guess. I didn't realize I wasn't trying hard enough.

(CONTINUED)

FERN

You *guess*.

GEORGE

(trying to say the right
thing)

I'm not trying. I'm taking you for
granted.

FERN

That's fine, George. Spare me your
bullshit.

GEORGE

What? I can see now what I'm doing
wrong. I admit it.

FERN

Now you see it. That's great.

GEORGE

Okay. Why do you have to be so rude
to me? I'm trying to have a
conversation with you and all you
do is repeat what I say (mimics her
tone) *like this*. How is that
helpful?

FERN is silent.

GEORGE

And who's to say I'm not trying?

FERN

Okay...

GEORGE

Maybe you don't appreciate what I
do because nothing is good enough
for you. You have this pretty
perfect fantasy of what you want
and when it's anything less than
that, you think it's trash, that
it's shit.

FERN

What are you even talking about?
Name one instance when I didn't
appreciate something you did for
me.

GEORGE thinks a moment, but in his flurry of emotion, he
can't think straight.

(CONTINUED)

GEORGE

I don't know. I can't think of anything. But you know what, maybe I can't think of anything because I let it go. I think, "Oh maybe you're having a bad day." And that's okay. It's not indicative of how you feel about me.

FERN

But see that's it. You can't remember anything because you didn't care enough to actually do anything in the first place.

It's hard for GEORGE to counter that statement. After a moment, FERN suddenly jumps off the bench.

GEORGE

Fern, where are you going?

FERN

I don't know. But don't follow me.

GEORGE watches her get in a car and drive off. He sits there looking into the park.

Another GROUNDSKEEPER approaches the bench and tries to wipe down some indelible stain on the bench. GEORGE is unfazed.

EXT. - PARK SQUARE - SIMULTANEOUS

A young couple, JOON and TRACY, can be seen jogging up a trail from afar, approaching the viewer. Tracy is in tears.

TRACY

NOOOOOOOO.

We see the duo slow down as they near. TRACY starts to wander off the trail, exhausted, defeated, sad.

JOON

Tracy, c'mon. You can do it.

TRACY finds a patch of grass and slumps down in it.

TRACY

NO. Why are you so mean to me?

JOON

What? Baby, we agreed to do this together. I gotta push you or not you don't get better.

(CONTINUED)

Pages 27-30 omitted