

Self Therapy

by

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FADE IN:

ON TERRACE

A man(protagonist) is standing on a terrace. He is nervous and scared. His face is not shown. Only his back should be shown. He is looking at the sky. He is close to the edge. He is about to jump. His hands grip the railing. He raises himself up.

Screen blacks out. There is loud sound(of someone falling on a car)(something like thump). Car's alarms are heard. All this happens while the screen is black.

(YOU CAN CHANGE SOMETHINGS FROM HERE. JUST MAKE SURE THE CHARACTER'S FACE ISN'T SHOWN).

CUT TO:

INT. PROTAGONIST'S HOUSE

Protagonist puts some pills on his palm and takes them.(anti depressants of sleeping pills. everytime he takes them he hears a doorbell and neighbor comes). There is a sound of a door bell heard. The protagonist opens his door. There is someone at the door. Protagonist has never met him. He is confused.

NEIGHBOR

Hello ji! I just moved in next door.(points at his house.) Thought I would introduce myself to you.

PROTAGONIST

Uhh. Nice to meet you.

NEIGHBOR

Should I come in?

PROTAGONIST

Suure? I guess?

Neighbor comes inside.

PROTAGONIST

Have a seat.

Neighbor sits on a chair. The Protagonist walks towards him with a limp. He has a cane. He sits on a chair exactly opposite to him at 180 degrees. There is some artifact/thing shown on screen somewhere that can be used as a gift later on.

Nurse enters from inside. Do not show her face in any of the scenes.

PROTAGONIST

Nurse can you bring some tea?

Nurse nods and exits.

NEIGHBOR
 (While looking around)
 Nice place that you have here.

Camera moves around to show untidy and depressed looking house.

PROTAGONIST
 Don't sweat about it. It's filthy around here. Anyways I forgot to ask you, who are you?

Entire time the Protagonist subconsciously fiddles with the bandage on his arm.

NEIGHBOR
 Oh-oh sorry about that, my name is Sahil, I shifted here very recently. I live next door. You can visit anytime.

PROTAGONIST
 Ah my name's Sahil too, if you could believe it! Mein hockey ka bohut bada khiladi tha(chuckles).

Protagonist taps at his legs with his cane.

NEIGHBOR
 Sorry to hear that.

PROTAGONIST
 So what do you do?

NEIGHBOR
 I am a retired therapist.

(in every convo add some extra scenes not focussing on main characters)

Nurse enter with only one cup of tea and puts it on table. The neighbor doesn't react/care.

CUT TO:

INT. PROTAGONIST'S HOUSE

Again doorbell rings and neighbor is at the door. Neighbor has a the artifact/gift which was shown earlier with him.

NEIGHBOR
 I was distributing this gift from my housewarming ceremony.

Protagonist accepts it. He is confused.

PROTAGONIST
 Did not invite me?(joking manner)

NEIGHBOR

It was only for close friends and family.

NEIGHBOR

I wanted to discuss something related to society's parking rules if you have some time?

PROTAGONIST

Sure come on in.

Neighbor and Protagonist sit on the same spots.

NEIGHBOR

So how much do you pay for your parking.

PROTAGONIST

I don't have a car.

NEIGHBOR

Oh

PROTAGONIST

However I know the rates around here and how to get away with it.

NEIGHBOR

Seems like I came to the right man.

Nurse enters.

PROTAGONIST

Nurse, some tea if you will?

Nurse leaves.

NEIGHBOR

By the way I asked the society secretary for using the terrace for my party, he refused saying it remains closed all the time because some dude tried to commit suicide. Do you know who it was?

PROTAGONIST

Yup

NEIGHBOR

Who?

PROTAGONIST

Me.

Neighbor confused/scared.

NEIGHBOR

You tried to commit suicide? Is this your ghost I am talking to?

PROTAGONIST

Yeaah. Not a ghost, all real. I survived it.

NEIGHBOR

Oh god, thank goodness.

PROTAGONIST

Don't really care much now. Would have tried it again if it wasn't for that hawk.(gestures towards the direction the nurse went).

NEIGHBOR

Don't mind me, but it's the job of neighbors to be nosy. Why did you try to commit suicide?

PROTAGONIST

You see. I am- I WAS a hockey player, once. Then I had this horrible accident and developed this limp. A hockey player with a limp, my career was over. My team deserted me, my manager left me and I lost all my contracts. Had to sell my family house for my treatment. My wife left me too.

NEIGHBOR

That's rough buddy. Is there anything I can do for you?

Neighbor looks around at his house again but in a different light(after knowing the reason).

NEIGHBOR

You know what, nobody has to live like this. Why don't we have a drink together? I don't think your nurse will mind that?

Protagonist smiles.

Nurse enters with only one cup of tea and puts it on the table.

CUT TO:

INT. PROTAGONIST'S HOUSE

Protagonist is having some water(with his medicine). Again doorbell rings and neighbor is at the door. Neighbor has a bowl in his hands this time.

NEIGHBOR

You got some ice? I just moved in I don't have a freezer yet.

PROTAGONIST

Sure come on in.

Neighbor and Protagonist sit on the same spots.

PROTAGONIST

You fancy a game of chess.

NEIGHBOR

Why not.

Nurse enters.

PROTAGONIST

How about some tea?

NURSE

Sure.

PROTAGONIST

Also bring in some ice.

Nurse leaves.

NEIGHBOR

White or black?

PROTAGONIST

Black for me. First game, will give you a chance.

Neighbor and Protahonist arrange the pieces on the board while havning a convo.

NEIGHBOR

So anything new in your life? New jobs or something?

PROTAGONIST

I haven't tried to find one.

NEIGHBOR

Why?

PROTAGONIST

I don't know, I just don't feel like getting one.

NEIGHBOR

But you need to get out of here. Experience what the outside world is like once again. You never know what destiny has in line for you.

PROTAGONIST
(shakes his head)
I don't think that would be a great
idea.

NEIGHBOR
It's not as bad as you might think
it is.

Protagonist is kind of annoyed by the neighbor's pursuit but he doesn't say anything. Nurse enters and brings in one cup of tea and puts it on the table.

CUT TO:

INT. PROTAGONIST'S HOUSE

Again doorbell rings and neighbor is at the door. Neighbor has a small book with him this time- chess for dummies.

PROTAGONIST
Prepared to meet your fate?

NEIGHBOR
(like a robot)
I am new and improved Sahil
2.0(shows his book)

Neighbor and protagonist move back to their same spots.
Arrange their pieces.

PROTAGONIST
You can have white again. I am kind
that way.

NEIGHBOR
I can fend for myself, I have the
power of this book.

Nurse enters.

NURSE
Tea?

PROTAGONIST
Sure.

Nurse leaves.

NEIGHBOR
So was thinking about it, have you
ever considered therapy?

PROTAGONIST
Nope.

NEIGHBOR
It's good though, you should give
it a shot.

PROTAGONIST

I just don't think I need it.

NEIGHBOR

You aren't in as good shape as you think you are.

PROTAGONIST

I know. What about it?

NEIGHBOR

So why not give therapy a chance?

PROTAGONIST

Maybe because I don't want to get better.

NEIGHBOR

You know I am a retired therapist right? I could help you-

PROTAGONIST

Help is for those who need it. I have accepted my fate. I don't want help.

NEIGHBOR

Therapy not only teaches you to accept what you have but also how to live with it.

PROTAGONIST

Wait, did I mention how annoying you have been? Trying to force me to get better?

All this time chess is being played.

NEIGHBOR

(realises he has crossed
a line, looks down
moving his piece on the
board)

Not a good time for this but..
Check.

Nurse enters with one cup of tea and puts it on the table.

CUT TO:

INT. PROTAGONIST'S HOUSE

Doorbell rings again. It's the neighbor.

PROTAGONIST

Come on in.

Neighbor and protagonist sit on their respective chairs.
There is the book that neighbor brought yesterday already on

the table.

NEIGHBOR

Sorry about last time. I did not realise how persistent I had become. You see I have been in this profession for so many years, I just can't see someone being broken. It's like I have developed an instinct to fix people. Sometimes I don't even realise how annoying I can be.

PROTAGONIST

It's fine you were just trying to help.

NEIGHBOR

So everything's cool then?

PROTAGONIST

(While setting his pieces
on the board)

I guess so.

Nurse enters.

PROTAGONIST

Nurse, tea?

Nurse nods and leaves.

NEIGHBOR

So are you going to the new year's party in the society tomorrow?

PROTAGONIST

Nope.

NEIGHBOR

Got any other plans?

PROTAGONIST

No.. Actually yes. Sit at my spot and have some drink.

NEIGHBOR

Well they are taking money from your maintaince bill, I would say attend it just for the sake of it.

PROTAGONIST

Naah. It's just an excuse for parties. It's just boring and mostly for kids. I used to have real parties back in my days. Everytime I would win a game we used to go to pubs and the man of
(MORE)

PROTAGONIST (cont'd)
the match was forced to chug down
gallons of beer.

NEIGHBOR
Tell me about it!

Nurse comes in with one cup of tea and sets in on the table.

CUT TO:

THERE ARE MULTIPLE SUCH SESSIONS.

A montage of many such sessions- Sound of doorbell,
Protagonist opening the door for the neighbor, both going
back to their own seats to play chess, neighbor getting his
white piece everytime, nurse bring the protagonist a cup of
tea. All this with some fitting music.

Or add match cuts with chess pieces.

CUT TO:

INT. PROTAGONIST'S HOUSE

Sound of a doorbell. Protagonist opens the door for the
neighbor. Protagonist is in a good mood for the first time.
He lets the neighbor in. Both go to their respective seats.

NEIGHBOR
Did you catch the game last night?

PROTAGONIST
So that I am reminded of my plight,
sorry no.

NEIGHBOR
It should not necessarily remind
you of your condition, there are
many personalities in sports who
had it rough but still bounced
back. There's this player Sandeep
Singh from your own sport who came
back from a serious injury. You can
get inspired from him.

PROTAGONIST
I didn't know you were interested in
hockey?

NEIGHBOR
Naah, I watched his biopic.

PROTAGONIST
(sighs)
Well let me tell you something.
Life is no fairytale. You have one
injury, it's over. There are
(MORE)

PROTAGONIST (cont'd)
millions in line waiting to replace
you. There are no miracles as such.
Sandeep Singh was 1 in a million
case. Life is not as lovely as the
biopics make you believe.

Nurse comes in. Protagonist gestures her. She leaves.

NEIGHBOR
You don't have to make a comeback
in the same sport. There are many
opportunities in life. We live in a
capitalist world. There are many
jobs you can take up.

PROTAGONIST
We can't believe we are having this
conversation again.

NEIGHBOR
That's because we are venom. Your
problem is my problem. How many
days are you going to spend like
this?

PROTAGONIST
What do you suggest I do.

NEIGHBOR
I will give you a task- make a list
of all the professions you can take
up which won't require your leg as
much.

PROTAGONIST
Let's see.

Protagonist thinks to himself when Nurse enters with one cup
of tea and sets it on the table.

INT. PROTAGONIST'S HOUSE

Protagonist checks his medicine box and it's empty. He looks
at his door expecting the neighbor. He is not here. He opens
to check if someone is there or not. The neighbor isn't here
for the first time. He closes the door and goes back to his
sofa and lays down. He looks very sad. Close up on his face
as he looks at the door. He stares at it while he falls
asleep. Many days pass, he lays on his sofa (clothes change
something like stop motion from bird-eye view). One day he
decides to do something, suddenly. He gets up, calls his
nurse.

Nurse comes in.

PROTAGONIST
I am going somewhere.

NURSE

Where?

PROTAGONIST

To my friend's house. For the first time.

Nurse is happy that he is finally leaving his house.

Protagonist is happy and dresses himself up.

Protagonist leaves his apartment and walks through the corridor to check the next house. The camera should glance over the nameplate of the house which should say something other than Sahil, a hint that the neighbor doesn't exist/was made up. It should be very subtle and not much time should be given to that frame so that it doesn't look it was shown on purpose. The protagonist glances down at a lock. The house is locked. He is confused. There is deafening music. He turns around and walks towards his house. The camera should follow him. Protagonist standing outside the door of his house. He pushes open his door and walks in to see- the neighbor sitting on his chair. The protagonist walks close. The nurse is standing close by, visible on the camera but out of focus. Protagonist goes and sits on his seats.

NEIGHBOR

You are late to your own house.

PROTAGONIST

I was checking your house.

Neighbor smiles. Protagonist is confused at first but then realises something and smiles back.

NEIGHBOR

I will take black this time, show you some mercy.

Protagonist chuckles.

NEIGHBOR

So did you do it?

PROTAGONIST

What?

NEIGHBOR

Did you make the list I asked you to make. The profession one?

PROTAGONIST

Yeah I did.

NEIGHBOR

So what's the first profession on the list.

PROTAGONIST

Therapist

Neighbor and Protagonist both smile.

There is a cut and the camera shows a field view of both of them(both on screen shown together from sideways) but this time the protagonist and neighbors have swaped seats. It should be subtle and instant cut. The camera starts moving back and screen cuts to black.

THE END