

SHIFTS

By

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1 EXT/INT. Outside - Night to Day.

FADE IN.

The night is calm and peaceful, there is a slight noise of wildlife setting off in the distance and the moon is shining bright. It slowly transitions into daytime.

A house is in the distance and some muffled shouting can be overheard, gradually getting louder and more persistent.

A family is gathered in the living room with tension slowly rising. CHARLES is half way through the bottle, with the rest of the family scared halfway to death.

CHARLES

Why? Why can you not just be normal?

CAROLINE

Leave him alone, he's fine, please just stop acting-

CHARLES

Stay out of this, always with the defending. You know as well as I do, something is not right with the boy!

CAROLINE

No, all I know is that you've been drinking and you always get yourself into a state.. M..maybe you should put the bottle down and come to bed-

Without any hesitation, the father turns and swings towards the mother, knocking her over.

CHARLES

You see what you made me do?! Y-you always push me to do something ugly, something I'll regret..

CHARLES then begins to start rambling on another one of his rants but as time goes on, the rants become indistinguishable muffles.

Out of nowhere, JONATHAN and LUNA back into the corner covering their ears and eyes, but JONATHAN is beginning to shake uncontrollably, letting out slight shrieks of what start to sound like pain.

LUNA

Stop that, before he notices and comes over here to take it out on us..

He does not respond to her, but he gradually starts getting louder and louder.

LUNA

What did I just say, he's going to hear you, just be quiet.

Just as she finishes her sentence, CHARLES turns and focuses his attention on JONATHAN and LUNA, but just as he begins creeping towards them, JONATHAN all of a sudden lets out a big scream and as if by some illusion, shapeshifts into his very own sister. CHARLES freaks out and so does LUNA, both screaming in disbelief. But CAROLINE simply just walks out of the room. Once CHARLES and LUNA finally leave, CAROLINE walks back in and slowly sits down next to JONATHAN and whispers into his ear.

CAROLINE

I still love you, every inch of you.

2 EXT. OUTSIDE STREET - AFTERNOON

30 YEARS LATER

30 years have passed by. JONATHAN is walking down the street in a hasty manner, in a rush to get somewhere. After some time, he finally arrives at what looks to be his childhood home, finishes up a cigarette and then heads inside.

3 INT. CARE HOME - AFTERNOON (CONT)

JONATHAN goes up to the RECEPTIONIST who seems pleased to see him, clearly knowing who he is.

RECEPTIONIST

Oh hello there, good to see you again.

JONATHAN

Good to see you too, is it possible to see my mother?

RECEPTIONIST

Yes of course, just go straight ahead, I had a feeling you'd be coming today so I already scheduled you in for a visit.

JONATHAN

Oh..that's very kind of you, thank you so much.

RECEPTIONIST

Honestly not a problem..

The RECEPTIONIST stares at him for a while with a kind smile, quickly acknowledging she has been staring, she promptly looks away. JONATHAN then walks on down the hallway and into a room.

JONATHAN
H-Hey mum, how are you?

CAROLINE
What day is it today?

BEAT

JONATHAN
Tuesday.

CAROLINE
Right, yes I see. And who are you?

JONATHAN
Mum..It's me.

CAROLINE
I just want Charles.

JONATHAN
Mum we've been through this time and time again..Dad isn't here anymore, he died a long time ago now. Do you remember? Do you remember who I am today?

CAROLINE
I know today is Tuesday.

JONATHAN
I know you do, but do you know who I am?

The MOTHER looks at him in slight anger, but mostly confusion, as if she was staring at the wall right through him.

CAROLINE
No.

JONATHAN
I'm your son. But that's okay you've just forgotten again. Do you need anything, some water? Are you hungry?

CAROLINE

I don't have any children, Charles and I are nowhere near ready for them yet..

JONATHAN

Okay mum, look are you hungry or thirsty-

In a now exhaustingly angry manner, the MOTHER turns towards him and stares right into his eyes.

CAROLINE

Stop calling me mum! I don't know who the fuck you are! Leave me alone and don't come back until you find Charles and take him here to visit me.

JONATHAN

Okay, I'll come back tomorrow and I will bring Charles with me. Okay?

CAROLINE does not reply, only stares blankly away from him, already forgetting the entire conversation that just transpired.

4 EXT. STREET - AFTERNOON

JONATHAN walks straight by the RECEPTIONIST and leaves, offering her a weak hand gesture to indicate he is saying goodbye. He walks down the street and gets into his car. He takes a deep breath in and begins crying.

5 INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

FLASHBACK

25 years ago. JONATHAN and CAROLINE are having a heated, yet calm discussion about the rest of the family.

JONATHAN

When though, because I haven't seen them in so long now. And I know something is wrong so why isn't anybody telling me? Look, I

know they don't accept me, I understand that, I've accepted it and I understand. But I need to know what's going on now.

CAROLINE

Fine, you're right. Your father is ill. He doesn't have much time left. But he's requested something and you're not going to like it..

JONATHAN

Okay, tell me then.

CAROLINE

He doesn't have long left, his wishes are that when he passes..I'm sorry honey-

JONATHAN

Just say it.

CAROLINE

He doesn't want you there for the funeral.

In a frozen glare, he stares at his mum for a couple of moments. Then he gets up and walks out the room in utter silence, with sadness written all over him.

END FLASHBACK

6 INT. CAR - AFTERNOON

As JONATHAN continues to cry, he manages to compose himself, turns on the engine, switches on the radio, adjusts his mirror carefully, pulls out and drives off into the distance.

7 INT. CAROLINE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING

The morning is quiet, birds are singing outside and trees are swaying in the wind. CAROLINE is sitting in a chair, anxiously twiddling her fingers and tapping her toes. Aimlessly staring out the window into the distance, yet she is not paying attention to the birds, not noticing the trees. Almost as if to say she was staring out of a window that is no more than a black

abyss of nothingness. Murmuring some words to herself, she doesn't even notice the door opening behind her.

CAROLINE

I know I had them..them somewhere, before this? Where have I..But I know they were here before.

JONATHAN walks in, once he knows that he is out of eyesight from anyone else, he takes a deep breath in, holds back some tears in his eyes, and shapeshifts into CHARLES, then locks the door behind him to make sure nobody disturbs them.

CAROLINE then turns around and the emotionless expression in her eyes almost switches like a key in a lock, slowly unlocking and opening into a smile.

CAROLINE

Oh charles! You're here! Come here, come here let me see you for a moment..You're so handsome. Hold my hand, I'm so scared.

CHARLES

Of course mu..Caroline. But why are you scared?

JONATHAN slowly reaches over and holds her hand gently with care.

CAROLINE

I can't find them. My jewelry, They stole them..Or they hid them from me. I don't trust them at all Charles, can you find them for me?

CHARLES

I don't think they have taken anything from you, why would they do that?

CAROLINE

I don't know, maybe you're right..But-

CHARLES

But what Caroline?

CAROLINE

When can we go home? I don't like it here. I want to go home,
the kids need to be fed.

CHARLES

Caroline, the kids are all grown up now, have been for a while.
Don't you remember?

BEAT

CAROLINE

Oh..Yes I think I remember that now. Well that doesn't mean that
we can't go home then?

At this point JONATHAN gets up and turns his head towards the
door and then back to her.

CHARLES

Maybe tomorrow, how about that?

CAROLINE

Sure, can I ask you something charles?

CHARLES

Of course, anything.

CAROLINE

Why were you so harsh to Jonathan? He is such a good boy. I hope
you apologise to him before it's too late, he has an
extraordinary gift. Something you..See as a curse, but you're
wrong. I hope you make amends with him before it's too late..

CHARLES

You said that twice, are you feeling alright, do you need to
rest now?

CAROLINE

Just promise me, he loves you so much and he needs to know how
much you love him.

CAROLINE then looks directly into his eyes, almost as if to say that now she's not looking at CHARLES, but talking directly to JONATHAN now.

CAROLINE

I just wish Jonathan would stop living his life in shame, he should meet someone and start taking his life seriously. He's been so caught up in his own family, he forgot to make his own. Do you hear what I'm saying? Every inch Jonathan..

JONATHAN shapeshifts back into himself, acknowledging the chance that CAROLINE may realise what he is doing.

JONATHAN

I promise. I do see, I should-

CAROLINE

You'll come see me tomorrow right?

Holding back tears, he leans in and hugs CAROLINE.

JONATHAN

I wouldn't miss it for the world.

Once again, CAROLINE turns towards the window and stares back out of it again, completely forgetting the entire encounter. JONATHAN unlocks the door and leaves the room.

8 EXT. SUPERMARKET - MORNING

JONATHAN is walking around the supermarket, doing his usual shopping for the week, collecting goods one by one, consulting the list at hand. Suddenly he receives a phone call out of the blue. The phone says 'unknown caller', usually he doesn't answer them, but this time he felt a draw to do so. A few moments pass and he picks up the phone.

JONATHAN

Hello?

CALLER

Hello, is this Jonathan?

JONATHAN

Yes, speaking. Who is this?

BEAT

CALLER

I work at the carehome your mother has been stationed at. I have some bad news I'm afraid. In the early hours last night your mother passed away. I am sorry for your loss, would you be able to come down anytime soon?

JONATHAN

Thank you for informing me. Did she pass peacefully?

CALLER

Towards the end, she was very confused. She was convinced her husband- you're late father, had come to visit her and went into detail about him. It was slightly out of the ordinary though, for a while she wasn't recalling anything at all, she didn't really know herself anymore, or anyone else for that matter. I'm not a doctor though so I'm unsure. If you can come by today that would be great. What time works best for you?

JONATHAN

I can be there for about midday?

CALLER

Okay, see you then.

JONATHAN

Goodbye.

Without any hesitation, JONATHAN leaves his trolley and walks out of the supermarket.

9 INT. SUPERMARKET - NIGHT

2 WEEKS LATER

JONATHAN is once again doing his weekly shop and bumps into the RECEPTIONIST from the care home, both their trolley's bang into each other.

JONATHAN

Oh I'm so sorry-

RECEPTIONIST

No no, I'm- Oh it's you, how are you doing Jonathan? I'm so sorry to hear about your mother passing, she was a kind woman.

JONATHAN

I'm doing okay, thank you. That's kind of you to say that, I'm glad I got to spend some time with her before.. Anyway the funeral was a few days ago. It was lovely yeah..You can call me Jon by the way.

RECEPTIONIST

Okay Jon..

They both stare at each other for a couple of passing moments, catch each other's eyes, then let out a comfortable laugh together. JONATHAN thinks about the last thing CAROLINE said to him.

JONATHAN

So hey..Would you like to get some coffee?

RECEPTIONIST

A coffee? At this time of night? No.

JONATHAN

Oh okay sure no-

RECEPTIONIST
How 'bout a drink instead?

BEAT

JONATHAN
I'd like that.

JONATHAN shares a smile with her.

RECEPTIONIST
Come on.

The RECEPTIONIST holds out her hand as she walks away from him.
JONATHAN smiles innocently and walks away with her.

FADE OUT.

