

NOTE TO SELF

Written by

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INT. EMPTY AUDITORIUM - PRESENT DAY

A lone piano sits atop an empty stage. The lights are dim.

C slowly walks onto the stage clutching a well-worn diary. She takes her time.

C sits at the piano and takes it in, placing her diary beside her. She inhales the smell of the claviature and surveys her surroundings.

C is a woman used to this moment, but has deliberately avoided it for so long.

She opens her diary and pulls out a crumpled piece of sheet music. She looks at it for a moment, like it were an old photograph. She places it back in the diary and on top of the piano.

She brings up her right hand and strokes the keys. She brings up her left hand and braces, ready to play. She pauses, something is stopping her.

She takes a deep breath, and closes her eyes. As she is about to play, THE VOICE interrupts her.

THE VOICE

Think of it. The first time you heard it.

CUT TO BLACK.

In the darkness we hear the distant sounds of a happy childhood: laughter and play.

THE VOICE (CONT'D)

The divinity. The way it captured you, transported you to a nirvana. That *first* note.

The note plays. It's delicate.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODLAND - DREAM

C stands far away from us clutching her diary. We begin to hear the crackle of a record player.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LONG AGO

C sits in her chair as a record begins to spin next to her. She relaxes into the moment.

THE VOICE  
Ohh, the magic. The wonder it  
evoked... provoked.  
(*pause.*) But wait.

SHARP CUT BACK TO:

INT. EMPTY AUDITORIUM - PRESENT DAY

With her left hand, C holds her right wrist above the piano, as if stopping herself from playing.

THE VOICE  
Even now, the way it captures you,  
transports you, you can't go back.  
You're lost inside its endless  
woodland --

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODLAND - DREAM

C wanders a woodland. It's a beautiful day.

THE VOICE  
-- it's not so bad, really.  
Peaceful.  
(*pause.*) and you can hear  
it again, *that* note.

The note once again plays, which triggers:

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LONG AGO

C pulls a record out of a sleeve, she looks at it with awe, holding it up to the light. She readies to play it, carefully placing it on the turntable.

CUT TO:

INT. EMPTY AUDITORIUM - PRESENT DAY

C hesitates at the piano.

THE VOICE  
Just... play.

She starts to play, as she does so, the music begins with that same opening note.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODLAND - DREAM

C wanders some more through the limitless forest.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - LONG AGO

C sits at her desk and writes in her diary. The sun seeps in through her window.

THE VOICE

Oh but it's so beautiful, too  
beautiful almost --

C stops writing and shushes the voice.

THE VOICE (CONT'D)

Don't... just keep writing --

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODLAND - DREAM

C pauses.

THE VOICE

-- Walking --

CUT TO:

INT. EMPTY AUDITORIUM - PRESENT DAY

C plays the piano with her eyes closed.

THE VOICE

-- playing --

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LONG AGO

C sits back in her chair once again, eyes closed as the record plays.

THE VOICE

-- and listen.

The music gently builds. Suddenly it is halted by shouting.

CUT TO:

INT. EMPTY AUDITORIUM - PRESENT DAY

The shouting causes C to play a bum note. It jars. She is frustrated.

FATHER  
*(outside the room long ago)*  
 Can you come here please?

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - LONG AGO

C puts her pen down and gets up to follow her father's voice. She is halted in her tracks by The Voice.

THE VOICE  
 No, sit down.

C hesitates.

FATHER  
*(outside the room)*  
 Come here please!

THE VOICE  
 NO! Don't let him ruin it...

CUT TO:

INT. EMPTY AUDITORIUM - PRESENT DAY

C has stopped playing, but she is listening to the voice.

THE VOICE  
 Now... where were we?

C carries on playing.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODLAND - DREAM

C walks a bit brisker now, as the music begins to pick up its own pace. She doesn't stop so much to enjoy her surroundings.

## THE VOICE

That's the thing about it, the music. It takes you away. To new places --

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LONG AGO

C soaks in the music some more in her chair.

## THE VOICE

-- forgotten memories  
 (pause.) Although you never really did forget them. They were always there, within you  
 (beat.) like the music.

CUT TO:

INT. EMPTY AUDITORIUM - PRESENT DAY

C is in her element now, playing like she was born with the sheet music etched into her mind.

## THE VOICE

It feels almost perpetual. In that one moment you could play forever, but it changes. Like a story, it keeps evolving, and despite the fear you keep playing.

## FATHER

(outside of the room long ago)  
 Right, you've been doing nothing for long enough

Once again, C plays a bum note because of the interruption.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODLAND - DREAM

C has stopped in her tracks, she is looking into the trees as if she's noticed something.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LONG AGO

C looks up disappointed. The record keeps spinning but no music plays.

## THE VOICE

I wish you wouldn't listen to him!  
Keep playing... you're nearly  
there.

CUT TO:

INT. EMPTY AUDITORIUM - PRESENT DAY

C braces to play but is once again interrupted.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LONG AGO

## FATHER

Why don't you go and practice?

C stands.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODLAND - DREAM

C has really spotted something now. A male figure in the  
distance.

## FATHER

I said practice. You will NOT let  
me down.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - LONG AGO

C writes at her desk with feeling. She grips her pencil  
almost too tight.

## THE VOICE

I won't let him do this again.  
We're finishing this.

CUT TO:

INT. EMPTY AUDITORIUM - PRESENT DAY

C hesitates once again over the claviature.

## THE VOICE

If you just... play. Just play. He  
can't stop you. He's not even here

--

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODLAND - DREAM

C focuses in on the male figure. It is slowly moving towards her.

THE VOICE

-- he's there. He's far away now.  
(*pause.*) Play before he comes, you  
have to finish this. We have to  
finish this.

CUT TO:

INT. EMPTY AUDITORIUM - PRESENT DAY.

C braces.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LONG AGO

FATHER

(*outside the room*)

Don't make me come in there, I  
don't want to have to --

C reaches across to the volume dial on her record player and turns it up, which drowns out her father's voice.

CUT TO:

INT. EMPTY AUDITORIUM - PRESENT DAY

C furiously begins to play the final section of the piece. The pace has surely increased.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODLAND - DREAM

The male figure starts to move quicker now towards C.

THE VOICE

Run.

C begins to run as the figure chases her, holding her diary close to her chest.

Throughout it all are the muffled sounds of her father shouting.

CUT TO:



INT. EMPTY AUDITORIUM - PRESENT DAY.

C plays furiously.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - LONG AGO.

C writes furiously, almost scribbling on the page. There are frenzied knocks on her door.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODLAND - DREAM

C still runs, and the figure gains ground on her.

THE VOICE  
Just keep running --

CUT TO:

INT. EMPTY AUDITORIUM - PRESENT DAY

C still plays furiously and emotionally.

THE VOICE  
-- keep playing. The song must  
finish. All those dreams...  
nightmares, they end now.

Intercut are quick flashes of the record spinning.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LONG AGO

C grips the chair, eyes tightly shut. The figure of her father stands over her. He is clearly shouting but we cannot make out what he is saying.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODLAND - DREAM

C sprints some more but can't seem to get away. She is frantic.

THE VOICE  
All that pain, those sleepless  
nights, that sadness. You can feel  
it. Use it!

CUT TO:

INT. EMPTY AUDITORIUM - PRESENT DAY

C plays even more frantically now, her face is contorted with emotion.

In flashes, we cut between the living room, bedroom, and woodland as C grips her chair, scribbles frantically, and runs through the trees. Her father's shouting starts to bleed through the music until it is deafeningly loud and then all of a sudden ...

INT. BEDROOM - LONG AGO

The end of C's pencil snaps.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODLAND - DREAM

C trips with her own desperate momentum and falls, her diary lands next to her.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LONG AGO.

C sits shocked in her chair, destroyed by her father's emotional torment.

CUT TO:

INT. EMPTY AUDITORIUM - PRESENT DAY

C stops playing. She is lightly weeping.

FADE TO BLACK.

Her father's muffled voice fades back into existence.

FATHER

-- I don't know why you don't just listen to me.

(pause.) Get up!

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODLAND - DREAM

C is on the floor, breathless. The words of her father still ring in her ears.

FATHER

I said get up!

C tries to rise but can't. She pauses on the floor for a moment defeated. Then she notices the diary, it has fallen open on the page that held her sheet music.

THE VOICE

Maybe you were wrong... maybe we were wrong. Maybe those few compositions of sound, those vibrations... that's all they were.

CUT TO:

INT. EMPTY AUDITORIUM - PRESENT DAY

C sits defeated at the piano. The voice continues.

THE VOICE

Those dark corners of our mind, the hidden depths of defeat, that's not the music... that's him.

C picks up her diary, opens it and unfolds the sheet music.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - LONG AGO

C sits at her desk with her broken pencil.

THE VOICE

All those words written down, those stories better unsaid, the ones you promised to never tell out of fear... they are just stories, he doesn't live in those pages, he lives in the mind. A broken pencil didn't stop those awful echoes any more than music could. So write out of joy, not for revenge --

CUT TO:

INT. EMPTY AUDITORIUM - PRESENT DAY

THE VOICE

Play for the love of playing, and love the music as it was always meant to be loved --

C places the sheet music in front of her and begins to play again, the final moments of the piece.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODLAND - DREAM

C rises from the ground, she gets back onto her feet and stares into the direction her father once stood.

THE VOICE  
-- now think of it, once more. The  
first time you heard it.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LONG AGO

C relaxes into her chair once more, the record is spinning.

THE VOICE  
The divinity. The way it captured  
you, transported you to a nirvana.  
That last note.

CUT TO:

INT. EMPTY AUDITORIUM - PRESENT DAY

C plays her final note. She pauses after as it lingers in the air. She closes her eyes.

FADE TO BLACK.