

MEMORY

by

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aaarthorse

FADE IN:

1 INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

1

A MAN, in his mid 30's, dressed in office wear, trudges through the apartment door. He closes it, puts his bag on the floor and takes off his coat. He rubs his temples, stretches and yawns loudly.

MAN
Hey, Dad? I'm back.

No response.

He shakes his head and opens the fridge.

MAN
Dinner's in 5 minutes, alright?

He opens the microwave and puts a bowl of porridge and boiled vegetables inside.

Ding, the microwave rings out. The food is ready.

2 INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

2

The Man, SON, walks through the hallway to the bedroom. In the bedroom, DAD, an elderly gentleman in his early 70's, dressed in a burgundy vest, hums to a tune. He is listening to Frédéric Chopin's Nocturne in E-flat major, Op.9, No.2 on his old fashioned earphones.

SON
(tapping on the door)
Hey, Dad! Hey! Did you not hear me?
It's dinner time.

DAD
Dinner?

SON
Yeah. It's dark outside already. Could you hurry up?

Son removes Dad's earphones and puts the phone on table beside him. Dad looks puzzled and stares blankly at him. Son leaves the room. Dad stands up slowly and follows him.

3 INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

3

Dad walks into the kitchen. He sees Son eating at the dining

table.

DAD

Who are you? What are you doing in my apartment?

SON

I'm your son. And this is your dinner.

Son hands Dad the bowl of food. It's cold.

DAD

My son? Hmm...

Son looks up, raising his eyebrows.

SON

What? You have more to say?

DAD

Nah, I don't think so. I haven't seen my son in three years.

Son shakes his head.

SON

(muttering)

I am your son, but whatever.

DAD

Where is my daughter?

SON

She's gone.

DAD

Where is she? Is she okay?

SON

She's fine. She's on a work trip.

DAD

Is she coming back to see me?

SON

Yeah, she takes care of you. Remember?

DAD

Yes. Yes, of course. She's so kind to me.

SON
 (rolling his eyes)
 Yeah. She sure knows how to deal with you.

DAD
 Why are you here? Who are you? Where is my daughter?

SON
 Look, I've had a long day, alright? When you're finished with your dinner, just leave it in the sink. I'm going to my room.

Son tosses his bowl in the sink and storms out of the kitchen.

Dad sits alone in the kitchen, eating his cold dinner slowly. He pauses for a moment, lifts his head and gazes at the calendar on the wall.

4 INT. APARTMENT - SON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 4

Son picks up his phone and dials a number.

SON
 Hey, sis? Dad just had his dinner. You'll be back Sunday, right?

He leans against the wall.

SON (CONT'D)
 Yeah, that's great that you're enjoying it. Just be back soon. You owe me, big time. I've had to endure a very painful week of the same darn questions...Alright. Yeah. I know he has dementia. I know. Okay, okay. Yeah. I am. Okay, thanks. See you soon. Bye.

He hears a rustling sound. He turns around. He sees a piece of paper beside his window.

Opening the window, he retrieves the paper. It reads, "24 hours. All you've got. Meet at the cafe by the river at 1pm this Saturday. Don't be late."

SON
 What in the world...? Okay...Strange.

He trashes the paper and tosses it away. The rustling continues. He peers over at it, perplexed.

He picks it up from the floor, unfolding it. A soft yellow glow spreads over the paper.

5 **INT. CAFE - AFTERNOON**

5

It's Saturday. Son enters the cafe. He looks around. He glances at his watch. It's 12.55pm.

SON

(to himself)

This better not be a joke or prank or some waste of my time. I've got enough term papers to mark as it is.

The door swings open. Dad walks in.

SON

(to himself)

What in the world? Dad?

Dad orders 2 Americanos at the cashier. He pays for it. He walks over to Son's table and takes a seat.

DAD

Hey there. Didn't think you'd come. It's been three years since our last visit here. I'd let it slide.

SON

What? Is this a trick?

DAD

A trick? No. You were supposed to meet me here, remember? Saturday, 1pm? We always meet here?

SON

Right...Okay. Yeah. I remember.

DAD

I wanted to tell you, Son. I...The doctor said I've got dementia. I keep misplacing my keys. The other day I walked down the wrong street and nearly walked into the wrong house.

SON

Oh. Dementia? Yeah. Sounds about

right.

DAD

The thing is...it's bad. It's been getting worse. I wanted to tell ya. I might not be here the next time we're supposed to meet...I might not remember who you are the next time...Ah, how about...Do you wanna go down by the river, like we used to?

SON

(reluctantly)

Okay...Dad. Let's take a walk.

6 **EXT. RIVERSIDE - AFTERNOON**

6

Dad and Son walk along the river, surrounded by small yellow daffodils, gradually blooming. The river ice is melting and the waters are starting to flow slowly.

DAD

You know this river has been here since I was a child?

SON

Hm?

DAD

My buddies and I used to race each other down the river bank. I'd come in second. Every time.

SON

Really?

DAD

Well. Second...last, I mean. I wasn't as sporty as the others. You know? Music's more of my thing.

SON

Yeah. Violin and piano.

DAD

That's right. I just love the way the melodies can melt into each other. There's nothing like a good tune played with skilled hands on a piano and a violin singing along.

SON
 (chuckling)
 Yeah. You've got that skill.

DAD
 You've got it too. Music. The skills,
 the practice. It's been so long since
 I last heard you play.

SON
 I...School was busy. You know how
 college is. I don't have time to sit
 around and play the same old tunes
 over and over.

DAD
 Yeah. Well, I guess maybe now that
 your job's fine and all, you can get
 back into it. It's relaxing.

SON
 Hmm. Yeah. Maybe. I'll see how it
 goes. I might pick it up again.

Dad stops in his tracks. He stoops down, picks up a tiny pebble from the edge of the river bank and throws it into the river.

DAD
 I know I've asked you meet me every
 Saturday. Listening to me blabber on
 and on about my childhood, this cup of
 coffee, the radio channels, my
 neighbour's dog...I was doing some
 thinking the other day.

SON
 About what?

DAD
 You've met me at the cafe on the last
 Saturday of every month. That's better
 than I deserve, frankly. Until...until
 three years ago...You stopped coming.
 I've only seen you at Christmas ever
 since.

He pauses.

DAD (CONT'D)
 I...I know I've not been a good father

to you, Son. And I mean, taking care of you properly and all. Coming back after the war, the booze... all that messed me up. I wanted to...I'm sorry. I know this changes nothing about the past and I've done some real awful things I shouldn't have ever done. But...but if there's any way I can...can we, you know, start again?

He grasps a larger pebble in his hand, fidgeting with it in his palm. His hand tremors slightly. A single tear forms at the corner of his eye.

DAD (CONT'D)

I don't blame you if you say no. I just...wanted to ask. That's all.

Son takes a deep breath. He picks up a large, oval pebble himself. He holds it up. He looks at Dad.

SON

This. All the past. Right here.

Son steadies his hand, swings and throws it far into the river.

DAD

Thank you...thank you. That's all I needed, my son.

Dad also tosses his pebble into the river. It disappears under the surface in an instant.

Dad and Son continue walking along the river. They talk and laugh, pointing at the birds by the river.

After some time, the sun begins to set. Hues of pink and orange seep into the clouds.

7 **INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - EVENING**

7

Dad and Son are having dinner together. Music plays on the radio in the background. The logs in the fireplace crackle. The calendar shows March 4. Spring time nears. They laugh several times.

8 **INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

8

Son sees Dad in the living room, reading the paper by the lamp.

SON
 Hey, Dad. Goodnight. I'll see you
 tomorrow.

DAD
 Hey, Son. Goodnight. Catch you
 tomorrow.

Son turns and begins walking down the hallway to his room.

9 **INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MORNING**

9

Son enters the living room. It is still dark outside. Dad is
 already awake and sitting by the fireplace.

SON
 Hey, Dad? Did you sleep well? You're
 up so early.

DAD
 Yes, I did. I'm sorry, who are you? I
 wasn't expecting a guest in my
 apartment.

SON
 (surprised)
 I'm...sorry? I'm your son.

DAD
 Oh. Hm. Really? I haven't seen him in
 three years.

SON
 We had coffee at the cafe by the river
 yesterday. We even took a walk along
 the river. Don't you remember?

DAD
 Did we?

SON
 (gently)
 Yes, Dad. We did. We had a great time
 together.

DAD
 So we did. I don't remember...I'm
 sorry...I don't remember.

SON
 (to himself)
 24 hours. Ah.

SON
 (to Dad)
 It's alright, Dad. Everything's
 alright. We had a great time. Let me
 play you a song. It's been a while.

Son sits at the small piano in the living room. He starts playing a tune, hesitantly. He begins playing more confidently.

DAD
 That's Nocturne in E-flat major, Op.9
 No.2, isn't it? My favourite.

Dad starts to smile and hums along. Son looks up from the piano keys and smiles back.

10 **EXT. STREET - AFTERNOON**

10

Saturday arrives again. Outside the apartment block, Son helps Dad walk down the steps. They walk towards the cafe, hand in hand. Together.

FADE OUT:

THE END.