

ALL THAT REMAINS

Written by

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INT. UNKNOWN - NIGHT

Darkness. Breathing. The breathing is steady at first, but soon the sound becomes accelerated, troubled.

Silence.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Suddenly a voice penetrates the darkness.

GIRL (V.O.)
I saw you one day.

We see a dark, dingy bedroom. The only light that can be seen is the red glow from a nearby answering machine. The number on the display shows one stored message.

The oppressive red glow from the machine fills the room, illuminating the mountains of dirty clothes on the floor and revealing the remains of long-expired food resting on various surfaces throughout.

The room has a general neglected look, much like the single, occupant who inhabits it.

A GIRL sits alone on the bed, hunched over, her long hair shrouding her face from view. It's as if she's being consumed by the space around her. She doesn't seem to care; she exists for no other reason than to occupy this room.

GIRL (V.O.)
You were wearing that same damn
shirt, the one you always wore,
with the rip down the side.

She crawls to the edge of the bed, reaching down to the floor to dig through a nearby pile of clothing. After a moment she comes away with a shirt.

GIRL (V.O.)
You always looked good in it
though.

EXT. OPEN AIR MARKET - MORNING (FLASHBACK BEGINS)

We see the MAN. He's standing in front of a stall in an open air market, wearing the simple grey shirt, a rip down the side, and a pair of jeans.

GIRL (V.O.)
I saw you there in the market.

The girl's face lights up as she sees the man in the distance. Suddenly her face falls. As the crowd between her and the man part we see that he's not alone. Next to him stands a WOMAN.

She stands there, watching him. All around her life continues, but she doesn't move an inch. She simply stares at the man, his back turned to her.

GIRL (V.O.)

There was someone else. You were standing so close to her.

He leans over and whispers something in the woman's ear. She seems not to notice; she's too preoccupied with the stall in front of her.

GIRL (V.O.)

You brushed her hair behind her ear, just like you used to do to me. She didn't seem to notice.

(FLASHBACK ENDS)

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

We return to the room, the girl sitting on the edge of the bed, clutching the shirt close to her chest.

She slides off the edge to sit on the floor, back resting against the bed frame. She raises the shirt higher, burying her face in it.

She remains there for a time, still clutching the shirt to her face.

GIRL (V.O.)

When I saw you, I couldn't breathe.

We hear a muffled sob.

EXT. POOL - NIGHT

Darkness. We see the girl floating in the open water, fully clothed, alone. She stares up at the pitch black sky, her long hair fanning out endlessly behind her.

Floating just out of reach are various articles of clothing, black shapes in the darkness.

INT. CAFE - MORNING

GIRL

Have you nothing to say for
yourself?

We open on a cafe, simple, but charming. The morning light shines in through the windows, illuminating the scene.

The man is seated at one of the tables, a coffee pot, cup, and an ashtray are resting on the table in front of him, but all of his attention is on the cigarette. He calmly smokes, a cloud of grey floats up towards the ceiling from the end of the cigarette.

The girl sits across from him. She stares at him for a long time before she finally speaks again.

GIRL (CONT'D)

Do you remember when we met?

He says nothing.

GIRL (CONT'D)

Of course you do. What a stupid
question.

The girl laughs.

GIRL (CONT'D)

It's the guy's job to remember
those sorts of things.

She pauses for a time.

GIRL (CONT'D)

When I met you, I felt breathless.

The man still says nothing.

GIRL (CONT'D)

You know, like, literally couldn't
breathe, but you know what I mean.

EXT. POOL - DAY (FLASHBACK BEGINS)

We see a pool. Someone, a man, crashes into the water, disappearing below the surface.

Now he's sitting on the edge of the pool, the girl next to him lying on her back. He holds the girl's head carefully with his hand, his thumb just behind her ear.

(FLASHBACK ENDS)

INT. CAFE - MORNING

The girl reaches with her hand, almost absentmindedly, to brush a loose lock of hair back behind her ear, but stops herself.

GIRL

I didn't know what to do. I didn't know what to say.

The hint of a smile appears across her face, but soon vanishes.

GIRL (CONT'D)

I'd been alone for so long, I guess I thought I was good at it, like I was used to it. That's sorta how things go I guess. You think you know everything. You think you're fine on your own.

She beams.

GIRL (CONT'D)

I never learned to swim when I was a kid. It's so fucking simple, you know?

Her smile falters.

GIRL (CONT'D)

It's like one of those moments everybody talks about. "If you do *this* then *that* will happen". If you make some other choice then life takes you down a different path.

The man doesn't respond. He continues to smoke.

GIRL (CONT'D)

You've got nothing to say?

He reaches forward and taps the ashes of his cigarette into the ashtray. She watches his every move.

GIRL (CONT'D)

They told me you'd leave me some day. They say every guy will do you wrong at some point, break your heart, you know.

The man finally looks at her. His lips are pursed, but not in anger. He appears sad.

GIRL (CONT'D)

They always said it like it was a big joke or something, you know how you have those friends who think that it's fine to just tease you all the time, but it's okay 'cause they're just kidding.

She laughs, halfheartedly.

GIRL (CONT'D)

I guess in a way they were right.

She stares at the pile of ashes in the ashtray.

GIRL (CONT'D)

I just didn't think it'd really be because of this.

She looks up at the man, their eyes finally meeting. She leans forward.

WAITRESS

Will there be anything else?

The girl looks up at the sound of the voice. We see a waitress standing there, a young one, perhaps her first job out of high school.

GIRL

What?

WAITRESS

I was saying did you want anything else? Or did you just want water? We have all kinds of things, you can have anything you want, we have like a-

GIRL

No, it's okay I have some-

As she swings her arm up to point at the glass of water the girl accidentally hits it with her hand, spilling it everywhere.

GIRL (CONT'D)

Oh, I'm sorry I didn't mean-

WAITRESS

It's okay, it's okay.

The waitress moves immediately to clean up the water.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)
It's not the end you know.

She lingers for a moment, looking at the girl. After a moment she beams at the girl.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)
I'll bring you another glass.

She disappears and after a moment returns with another glass of water.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)
Let me know if you need anything else. I'll be here.

The girl watches the waitress carefully as she walks away. She stares at her for a long time, watching her wait on other tables, before turning back to the man.

GIRL
I think I could've lived with it.

The man looks up at her.

GIRL (CONT'D)
I think I would've preferred there to just be some other woman. I could've lived with that.

The hint of a smile passes across her face.

GIRL (CONT'D)
I can see her now, she would've been like perfect, bombshell you know.

She laughs.

GIRL (CONT'D)
But she'd be a bitch for sure, like she was compensating for something. She would know deep down that she was actually the other woman. Bitch wouldn't be able to stand it!

She stares at him for a long time.

GIRL (CONT'D)
I was so angry. I hated you.

Her voice catches in her throat.

He reaches his hand across the table, but she pulls away.

GIRL (CONT'D)

Don't-

The man pauses for a time, then reaches for another cigarette, fumbles for a match, and lights it. He continues to smoke, the rings linger around his head forming a haze. The haze begins to blur his image.

He reaches across the table for the pot of coffee. He slowly pours himself a cup.

GIRL (CONT'D)

Il a mis le café...

The man looks up.

GIRL (CONT'D)

Fucking poetry.

The man just stares.

GIRL (CONT'D)

I read somewhere, in some book, "rhyme is barbaric". I think that's what the guy wrote. Someone famous, who cares, but he was right. Some things are awful for what they do to us.

(beat)

GIRL (CONT'D)

For how they make us feel.

She looks down at her lap.

GIRL (CONT'D)

I read this poem once. It made me very sad. Poetry shouldn't make you sad. I mean I get it. But in the poem there were these two people, a couple. They never spoke to each other, and eventually the man just gets up and leaves, without a word. He puts on his raincoat first, 'cause it's raining. Of course it's fucking raining, it's a French poem.

She laughs.

The cafe is somewhat empty save for a couple some ways away. On the bench next to the couple is a young child. The girl stares longingly at them for a long time before she responds.

GIRL (CONT'D)

But the couple in the poem didn't speak to each other, that's what always got to me. I couldn't understand why. I always wanted to know why.

After a moment she returns her gaze to the man.

GIRL (CONT'D)

I don't want to be the girl in that fucking poem. Say something.

The man returns to making his coffee. The girl simply watches him.

She watches as he pulls the cup of coffee towards him and reaches for a spoon. He dips the spoon into a nearby bowl of sugar. He pours the spoonful of sugar into the cup, and slowly stirs it. Then he slowly pours milk into the coffee, and stirs it once more.

He places the spoon back on the table.

He doesn't drink the coffee.

Time seems to stand still.

Suddenly the girl jumps up from her seat and smashes her hand against the cup of coffee, sending it flying to shatter against the wall.

GIRL (YELLING) (CONT'D)

Say something!

She glances back at the table and sees that the coffee cup has returned, all in one piece, steam still rising from it. She doesn't seem surprised.

She moves around the table and leans in close to him, her face nearly touching his, her lips only a short distance from his own.

GIRL (WHISPERING) (CONT'D)

You're nothing but a ghost.

He places the cigarette on the ashtray, turning his head away from her.

She backs away from him slowly, then resumes her seat.

GIRL (CONT'D)

I was so-

Her head falls.

GIRL (CONT'D)

It's like some cruel fucking joke
you know, you find something nice
that makes your life good and worth
something and then it's taken away.
I was so angry. I hated you.

He reaches his hand out once again for hers. She stares at it
for a moment before reaching hers out as well, placing it
just out of reach.

GIRL (CONT'D)

There's no point though. You're
nothing but a ghost.

The coffee remains untouched, the heat from it visibly
rising.

GIRL (CONT'D)

Just like me.

The girl stares for a long time before speaking again.

GIRL (CONT'D)

That cemetery, do you remember it?
It was the really old one. Like if
it was in some famous city then
tourists in silly hats and flowery
shirts would come and visit and
take pictures and piss off all the
locals.

EXT. CEMETERY - MORNING (FLASHBACK BEGINS)

We see a couple walking together, hand in hand, through an
overgrown cemetery, ornate tombstones all around them.

GIRL (V.O.)

They'd come to see the architecture
and all that stuff, pretty morbid.
What were you so excited about? It
was just a fucking cemetery. I
hated it, it was so hot outside. I
didn't like being outside, I didn't
like cemeteries, they always make
me uncomfortable.

We see the man spot something in the distance. He makes off towards it suddenly, dragging the girl behind him by the hand.

GIRL (V.O.)

You seemed to be enjoying it. I just wanted to leave, I didn't give a shit. We passed this one grave that was different though.

They arrive at the object of his attention, a grave marked with an ornate metal structure in the shape of a person.

(FLASHBACK ENDS)

INT. CAFE - MORNING

GIRL

I remember how much you liked it. You said you didn't want a boring tombstone either if you died. I still remember how you said it.

The girl smiles.

GIRL (CONT'D)

You turned to me, looked me straight in the face and said you just wanted a bench put over your grave so that people could sit their ass on you when they were tired.

She laughs.

GIRL (CONT'D)

You said it so matter-of-fact, so casually. I knew I loved you then. It was easy.

The man's cigarette rests on the ashtray, the tendrils of smoke rising from it to coalesce near the ceiling with the others, ghosts in the darkness.

GIRL (CONT'D)

I guess it's that kind of thing you take for granted, that everyone can do it, like riding a bike.

The man looks up at her suddenly.

GIRL (CONT'D)
Swimming I mean. You thought it was
so weird that I couldn't swim. I
never learned.

The man smiles at her.

GIRL (CONT'D)
It'd be over so quick you know,
like just going to sleep.

His smile fades quickly.

GIRL (CONT'D)
That's what they say anyway. But I
read somewhere that drowning hurts.
They never tell you that. Maybe it
won't.

(beat)

GIRL (CONT'D)
I'm already drowning anyway.

She stares at the man for a long time.

GIRL (WHISPERING) (CONT'D)
Say something, please.

The man simply stares back at her.

She lets out a shuddering breath.

GIRL (CONT'D)
I can't keep doing this with you. I
just can't.

Her head falls.

GIRL (WHISPERING) (CONT'D)
There's nothing left. I feel like a
shadow, like I'm fading away. Like
if- Like if the sun ever rose again
I'd just fucking disappear.

EXT. POOL - NIGHT

The girl floats in the open water, eyes closed. The surface
of the water is covered in a layer of clothes.

GIRL (V.O.)
It'd be over so quick, just like
going to sleep. But they never tell
you that it hurts.

The masses of clothes begin to surround her. She doesn't resist. The weight of them slowly begins to drag her down. She sinks below the surface.

The surface of the water becomes still again.

GIRL (V.O.)
When I saw you, I couldn't breathe.
You pulled me up so close, and I
couldn't breathe.

The girl floats just below the surface, all motion suspended.

EXT. OPEN AIR MARKET - MORNING (FLASHBACK BEGINS)

The girl stands alone in the market, staring at the couple in the distance, their backs turned to her. The man begins to turn his head towards the woman beside him to whisper into her ear.

GIRL (V.O.)
The girl in that poem, I used to
think she was sad because of
something the man had done. He
wouldn't speak to her, but maybe-

This time when he whispers to the woman she turns to look at him.

The girl sees that the woman standing next to the man is her.

(FLASHBACK ENDS)

EXT. POOL - NIGHT

Suddenly the surface of the water is broken as the girl emerges, taking in deep breaths of air.

GIRL
Maybe it was her all along, maybe
she just had to let him go, had to
stop blaming him. What if she had
known that. What if she just knew
and couldn't accept it.

INT. BEDROOM - DAYBREAK

We return to the bedroom. Soft morning light shines in through a small crack in the curtains, washing away the red glow that once dominated the room.

GIRL (V.O.)
I forgot the sound of your voice.

The girl remains sitting, alone, clutching the grey shirt to her face. Her clothes are soaked through, a puddle of water forming on the floor where she rests.

GIRL (V.O.)
There's a message from you on the machine. I don't want to listen to it. I worry about what it will say.

She lets the shirt fall from her face.

GIRL (V.O.)
You said all you wanted was that bench, a place for people to sit. You said it so casually. I'd give anything to be there again, just a moment, just to hear your voice once more.

She stands suddenly and walks over towards the dresser.

GIRL (V.O.)
It's suffocating. You fall in, you dive in, but there's no one there to save you from drowning in yourself.

She folds the shirt carefully and opens a drawer.

GIRL (V.O.)
Sometimes we get lucky in life, when we're young. We find that piece of us that's missing, that piece that completes us.

She raises the folded shirt up and presses it close to her face once more.

GIRL (V.O.)
When it's taken from you, you ask yourself over and over, "What did I do to deserve this?"

She places the shirt inside the drawer, and then shuts it.

GIRL (V.O.)

And when you've lost everything you
ask yourself what remains.

The girl walks over to the bedside table where the answering machine rests, the red glow faintly illuminating her face. She reaches out, her finger hovering over one of the buttons.

She presses the button. We hear the sounds of the answering machine coming to life.

GIRL (V.O.)

Everything remains.

CUT TO BLACK.