

In Time Of All Sweet Things

written
by
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FADE IN:

EXT. MORTUARY - DAY

Craftsman cottage on rustic property dotted with evergreens.

A sign on the shoulder of a gravel driveway -

"KYLER FUNERAL HOME PARKING"

An arrow points toward the cottage entrance.

An approaching Jeep Wrangler rolls past the sign.

Near the cottage's front door, TIM (43) - academic handsome - stands at a porch landing. He descends to the driveway, flashes a sympathetic look toward the vehicle.

TIM(PRE-LAP)

He's lying on a metal table...

INT. MORTUARY - HALLWAY OUTSIDE PREP ROOM - DAY

Tim and RENEE (43) - graceful beauty - stand face-to-face in front of a door, in sparse but warm light. Renee looks ill at ease. Tim's tone is calming.

TIM (CONT'D)

A white sheet is covering his body, but you can see his face. There's a lot of strange equipment around that we won't be using, so no need to worry about it.

His head is sunken in from the craniectomy. The red veins in his arms and legs are where blood settled. It's called "marbling". It still looks like him, but it's not him.

Renee draws a breath, exhales, nods.

RENEE

Okay.

She hoists two suitcases off the floor.

Tim grips the doorknob.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - 3RD GRADE CLASSROOM - DAY

(TIM AND RENEE ARE 33 YEARS OLD IN THIS FLASHBACK SEQUENCE)

A door swings open. Tim enters. His son DYLAN (8) darts across the threshold past him and an easel-mounted sign -
"WELCOME, 3RD GRADERS!"

Dylan slips by CLASSMATES searching for name cards on desks. PARENTS gain their bearings amidst the fray.

The boy's eagerness surprises Tim. He turns to his wife JANICE (35) - more pleasant if she smiled now and again - who enters behind him. Tim chuckles, she shrugs.

Tim surveys the room as Janice spots and walks toward a TEACHER (30) near a desk and overhead projector. Tim's panning gaze settles on--

RENEE - ACROSS THE CLASSROOM

She kneels beside her son JULIAN (8), seated at a desk. He fiddles with his name card as Renee speaks to him. Her look lands on Tim. She pauses as they lock on each other.

Tim smiles affably.

Renee returns the smile, holds a moment longer on Tim before she addresses Julian again.

BACK TO:

INT. MORTUARY - PREP ROOM - DAY - PRESENT

Dull walls, stainless steel cabinets, embalming equipment.

A long metal table with a wash basin abuts the middle of the back wall and extends toward the room's center.

A bulging white sheet is draped over the table. Renee pauses at its foot end, sees for the first time the corpse of her husband GLENN (43), covered up to his neck.

Renee's face and body quiver. Her eyes brim with tears. Tim shuts the door, halts behind Renee.

Renee's gentle hand falls on the sheet, drags across it as she walks closer toward Glenn's face.

A row of staples on Glenn's scalp runs from his hairline to behind his head. Another pattern slinks above one ear. The skin area marked by staples is concave. His hair is matted on one side, shaved on the other.

Renee's palm rests on Glenn's heart. She looks to Tim.

TIM

Take all the time you need.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - 3RD GRADE CLASSROOM - DAY

(TIM, RENEE, GLENN ARE 33 YEARS OLD IN THIS FLASHBACK SEQUENCE)

Halloween Party decorations on the walls. Sugar-fueled CLASSMATES in various costumes enjoy cupcakes and crafts.

IN A MORE PEACEFUL CORNER OF THE ROOM

Renee and GLENN (33) - blue Chicago Cubs cap - approach Tim and Janice at a punch bowl on a table swathed in cotton spiderwebs.

Renee smiles in familiarity at Tim.

RENEE

So yours is the superhero?

TIM

Every day, if it were up to him.

Renee chuckles. Glenn smiles, nods at Janice. Tim grins.

TIM (CONT.)

Yours is the gargoyle?

GLENN

The "Galaxy-Ruling Gargoyle". Made by Dad according to the boy's exact specifications.

RENEE

This is my husband Glenn Bennet.

Tim and Glenn shake hands.

TIM

I'm Tim Kyler. My wife Janice.

Greg shakes hands with Janice.

RENEE

I'm Renee.

Renee shakes hands with Janice, offers her hand to Tim.

TIM
Nice to meet you.

They shake hands, exchange lingering smiles. Glenn and Janice engage in inconsequential chat.

AT A CRAFT TABLE IN THE CLASSROOM - LATER

Glenn moans like a ghoul as he manipulates fingers on a paper-crafted skeleton hand. Julian laughs, does the same with another hand.

DYLAN - SEATED AT HIS DESK

tugs at the collar on his super hero costume.

DYLAN
(to Janice OFFSCREEN)
Mommy, It's too hot.

RENEE - SEATED AT JULIAN'S DESK

sips punch, looks toward--

JANICE - SEATED AT THE TEACHER'S DESK

Absorbed by her cellphone, thumbs tap the screen.

DYLAN (O.S.)(CONT'D)
Mommy?

Renee scans the room and spots--

TIM - AT A MONSTER-DECORATED PHOTO BOOTH

Hands inside a box of scary props, but his focus is on Glenn and Julian. He watches their antics admiringly.

DYLAN (O.S.)(CONT'D)
Mommy!

Tim whips toward the voice, walks to Dylan. Renee holds a warm look on Tim.

BACK TO:

INT. MORTUARY - PREP ROOM - DAY - PRESENT

Her head gently resting on Glenn's chest, Renee staunches tears, rises, turns to Tim at the foot end of the table.

RENEE
What do we do now?

TIM
We can bathe him.

RENEE
How do we do that?

AT THE LONG METAL TABLE - MOMENTS LATER

Tim - donning an apron - holds washcloths under a streaming faucet that fills the basin behind Glenn's head.

At a counter against an adjacent wall, Renee - wearing an apron - retrieves shampoo and conditioner bottles and a soap pump from a grooming bag inside a suitcase.

She sets the items on a towel draped over a metal cart, rolls the cart to the long table.

Tim and Renee stand on opposite sides of the table, Glenn's covered corpse between them.

Tim hands Renee a cloth. She pumps soap onto it, hands the soap to Tim. He squirts a glob onto a cloth.

Tim tugs the sheet and Glenn's gown downward, moves the cloth in circular motions over Glenn's shoulder. Renee soaps the other shoulder.

Renee looks at Tim for assurance. He nods encouragingly. Renee watches flecks of blood and medical adhesive wash off Glenn's body.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. PARISIAN-STYLE CAFE & BAKERY - DAY

(TIM, RENEE, GLENN ARE 33 YEARS OLD IN THIS FLASHBACK SEQUENCE)

PATRONS sit at tables, chat, drink coffee.

Tim stands at a counter next to a glass pastry case. A small chalkboard sign on the counter - "AUTUMN HOLIDAY BREW". A CASHIER sets a plated croissant and steaming mug of coffee in front of Tim, who fetches a bill from his wallet.

Renee enters. Tim catches her reflection in a mirror mounted behind the Cashier. They exchange smiles.

AT A TABLE INSIDE THE CAFE - LATER

Tim and Renee sit across from each other in front of a window that frames the view of a bustling street. Their vibe is comfortable, flirty, probing.

RENEE

So what kind of work do you do?

Tim gives a closed-mouth chuckle, considers a response, leans closer to Renee.

TIM

You wouldn't believe me if I told you.

Renee smiles, intrigued. He just got that more interesting.

INT. PARISIAN-STYLE CAFE & BAKERY - DAY - FLASHBACK

A stormy morning. Rain pelts the window. Tim and Renee - bundled in wet weather clothing, mid-conversation - sit at a corner table, away from PATRONS.

RENEE

And I yell at Julian, "I don't care if you don't have your backpack! We're late! We gotta go!" And Glenn's on the couch eating cereal, totally calm and he says, "You do realize it's Saturday?"

A shared laugh.

TIM

The "Forgot It's Not A School Day Freak Out". Dylan and Janice will tell you I'm guilty of that too.

Their laughter ebbs. Renee is more reflective, personal.

RENEE

(self-convincing)
He is a great dad.

She looks into her mug, carefully selects her words.

RENEE (CONT'D)

He's a great friend.

Hinting eyes tilt to Tim. He gives an understanding nod.

BACK TO:

INT. MORTUARY - PREP ROOM - DAY - PRESENT

Tim delicately clips Glenn's fingernails. Thoughts on Renee as his look drifts to her.

Renee massages shampoo into Glenn's remaining hair. Her rhythm slows. She is distant, somber.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. CITY PARKING LOT - DAY

(TIM, RENEE, GLENN ARE 33 YEARS OLD IN THIS FLASHBACK SEQUENCE)

Across the street from the cafe. Tim and Renee - cars parked beside each other - stand face-to-face next to the vehicles. A vibe of suppressed desire between them.

RENEE

Is it ever too much to handle?

Tim's eyes narrow as they hold on Renee.

RENEE (CONT.)

Your work.

TIM

It can be difficult...but never too much to handle.

INT. RENEE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Renee stands with her back pressed against the closed front door, eyes locked on Tim as he slowly moves in for a lingering, impassioned kiss.

INT. RENEE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Hands interlocked atop silk bedsheets, Tim and Renee make sensual love - Tim on top, lips tenderly exploring her neck.

CUT TO:

A CELLPHONE SCREEN

A text message from Renee - "4"

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - DAY - FLASHBACK

Christmas ornaments and wreaths adorn landscape trees. Tim's car rolls to a stop inside a stall just outside a first-floor room 4. He exits, walks hurriedly toward the room's door.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - SHOWER - DAY - FLASHBACK

Water cascades over Renee and Tim; she faces the shower head, he leans in and caresses her from behind, kisses her neck, shoulders, and back.

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY - FLASHBACK

An eighteen-wheeler rolls along an otherwise isolated two-lane passage choked by dormant woodlands dotted with snow.

PAST THE ROAD SHOULDER, INTO A STAND OF SPRUCE TREES

Tim's car is parked, strategically shrouded from passersby.

INT. TIM'S CAR - DAY - FLASHBACK

Tim and Renee kiss, caress in haste as they undress each other.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON RENEE'S FACE

A light breeze through her hair, a forlorn look in her eyes as she stares seemingly at nothing.

OFFSCREEN - LAUGHTER OF CHILDREN, A GROWL FROM GLENN

Renee's look shifts toward--

EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY - FLASHBACK

Glenn - Cubs baseball cap - stomps and waves his arms in the air as he growls. Julian and a group of KIDS scramble around a swing set and other play obstacles to avoid Glenn's reach.

GLENN
 (grumbly monster voice)
 I'm the Math Monster, and I'm
 hungry for kids who want to play
 all day instead of doing homework.

The kids squeal, laugh, and dodge. Glenn growls, pursues.

Renee's dour look is broken by a slight smile as she looks on.
 Her attention is then drawn to--

THE PLAYGROUND PARKING LOT

Tim and Dylan walk hand-in-hand toward Tim's car. Dylan carries a paper art craft.

Renee holds on Tim, anticipates his look.

Tim turns slightly in Renee's direction, but his focus remains on Dylan as he helps his son into the car.

Renee's face sinks.

INT. RENEE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

A CELLPHONE SCREEN

A text thread from Renee to Tim - "MISSED YOU AT NEW YEAR'S".
 No response. A later dated text - "WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN US?"
 No response. An even later dated text - "I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY
 YOU ARE TREATING ME THIS WAY." No response.

RENEE

Seated at a vanity in the dimly lit room. She inhales, looks into the mirror, her eyes red and puffy. Looks back to her phone as her thumb hovers over the keyboard letter "H". She pauses, lowers her phone.

She opens a vanity drawer pulls out--

A PRESCRIPTION PILL BOTTLE

The label reads "SETRALINE 100MG"

She grips the bottle, her thumb scoops the lid just when Glenn and Julian enter. Julian carries a messily frosted cupcake, Glenn carries a long-stemmed rose. Renee stashes the bottle.

GLENN / JULIAN
 Happy Valentine's Day!

Julian beams, dumps the cupcake onto the vanity. Glenn offers the rose. Renee cloaks her sadness with an appreciative smile. Julian and Glenn team hug her.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Renee sits alone at the dining table, uneaten cupcake in front of her. From her vantage point, she can see--

JULIAN'S BEDROOM

Glenn tucks a sleeping Julian into bed.

Renee watches, moved and ashamed at the same time.

TIM (PRE-LAP, PHONE FILTER)
I don't know how else to make you
understand...

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY - FLASHBACK

In the school parking lot at pickup. Renee's parked car.

TIM (O.S. PHONE FILTER)
I love my wife, and I love my
son...

INSIDE RENEES CAR (PARKED)

She stares ahead blankly, listens.

TIM (O.S, PHONE FILTER)
Dylan needs his daddy. I made a
mistake, but you have to forgive
me, and just let me go.

INT. PARISIAN-STYLE CAFE & BAKERY - DAY - FLASHBACK

PATRONS criss-cross past Renee, seated at a corner table all alone, the same blank face she had in the car. She stares over a lone coffee mug.

CLOSE ON RENEES AT THE TABLE

She looks down, into the mug; through it.

BACK TO:

INT. MORTUARY - PREP ROOM - DAY - PRESENT

Soapy basin water laps against Renee's motionless hand as she holds a comb just above Glenn's corpse's hair. Tim's hand ENTERS FRAME, gently touches Renee's hand.

Renee shakes her distant look. She looks down at her hand.

Tim's soothing hand guides the comb in Renee's hand through Glenn's corpse's hair.

PRE-LAP - CHILDREN SING A 6TH GRADE GRADUATION FAREWELL SONG

EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - AUDITORIUM - DAY - FLASHBACK

(TIM, RENEE, GLENN ARE 36 YEARS OLD IN THIS FLASHBACK SEQUENCE; ALMOST UNNOTICEABLE CHANGE IN AGE)

Snappily-dressed SIXTH GRADE GRADUATES strategically arranged on stage sing to an AUDIENCE OF PARENTS AND FAMILY MEMBERS. DRIFT ACROSS the group to catch SIXTH GRADE JULIAN BENNET (12) amongst them, identifiable by a name sticker on his sweater.

DRIFT ACROSS to find SIXTH GRADE DYLAN KYLER (12) - name tag sticker on collared shirt - farther toward the end of the row.

IN THE AUDIENCE

DRIFT PAST a MUSIC TEACHER (30) who stands in front of the kids and directs - PAN A ROW OF AUDIENCE SEATS to find Tim and Janice, then, PAN TO THE OPPOSITE SIDE to find Renee and Glenn.

IN THE AUDITORIUM - AFTER THE GRADUATION CEREMONY

Graduates and their families linger, mingle, pose for photos.

Tim and Janice stand together as they face Glenn and Renee. Tim and Renee do well to shield the truth, except maybe from one another.

GLENN

So... 'Guess maybe we'll run into each other sometime in middle school.

TIM

Yeah... 'Guess maybe we will.

GLENN

Well, we wish you the best.

Tim forces a smile, holds on Renee.

TIM

Me too.

Renee coerces a smile that almost immediately falters.

BACK TO:

INT. MORTUARY - PREP ROOM - DAY - PRESENT

An outfit of clothes is piled atop a table - including Glenn's Cubs cap. Not fancy, just a collared plaid shirt and ironed jeans; very classic, comfortable Glenn.

Renee picks up the plaid shirt, looks down at Glenn's corpse - atop the table, clean and dry. No knots in his hair.

She looks to Tim, who stands on the opposite side of Glenn's corpse. He nods.

Renee walks to the table. Tentative and gentle, she offers one shirt sleeve to Tim.

JUMP CUT MONTAGE - TIM AND RENEE DRESS GLENN'S CORPSE

Renee follows Tim's lead. They navigate the shirt around Glenn's stiff, uncooperative body.

They both effort to manipulate Glenn's body parts - first with the shirt, then the pants.

It's awkward. Clothing and body parts slip in and out of their hands, they struggle with balancing and holding the corpse in place. At one point, they even share a laugh.

END JUMP CUT MONTAGE

TIM AND RENEE AT THE TABLE WITH GLENN'S CORPSE - LATER

They look down at Glenn, fully-dressed. The change is incredible. From a cold, lonely corpse, Glenn now looks warm, comfortable; almost like himself, but not himself.

Renee catches tears. She leans down, lays her head on Glenn's chest. She quivers. The tears flow.

RENEE

(as if only Glenn can hear)

I'm so sorry...

I miss you so much...

I always loved you.

Tim stands behind her, lets her and Glenn have their moment.

RENEE (V.O.)
 In time of daffodils (who know the
 goal of living is to grow)
 forgetting why, remember how...

IN THE MORTUARY PREP ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Tim helps Renee pack her belongings into the suitcases.

RENEE (V.O.)(CONT'D)
 In time of lilacs who proclaim the
 aim of waking is to dream,
 remember so (forgetting seem)...

EXT. MORTUARY - PARKING LOT - DAY - PRESENT

Tim helps Renee load her suitcases into the jeep.

RENEE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 In time of roses (who amaze our
 now and here with paradise)
 forgetting if, remember yes...

Tim shuts the trunk of the jeep. He and Renee turn to each other, hold a look before embracing in a long hug.

CUT TO:

INT. TIM'S CAR / INT. RENEES JEEP (PARKED) - DAY - PRESENT

TIM

Sits behind the wheel, stares ahead in solemn thought.

RENEE

Sits behind the wheel, stares ahead in solemn thought.

EXT. CEMETERY - GLENN'S FUNERAL SITE - DAY - PRESENT

Renee - dressed in elegant black, burnishes in warm sunlight peering through the trees - stands near a coffin and an easel-mounted portrait of Glenn. She recites a poem to the small group of FUNERAL ATTENDEES.

RENEE (CONT'D)
 In time of all sweet things beyond
 whatever mind may comprehend...

Her eyes pan the crowd and fall on--

TIM

Black suit, stands amongst the group. Janice is next to him but almost completely OUT OF FRAME. He holds on Renee.

Renee holds on Tim

RENEE (CONT'D)
Remember seek (forgetting find)...

BACK TO:

INT. RENEE'S JEEP (DRIVING) - DAY

Renee behind the wheel as the jeep rolls down the gravel driveway of the mortuary. She seems to stare through the road as she drives away from Tim's parked car IN THE BACKGROUND.

RENEE (V.O.)
And in a mystery to be (when time
from time shall set us free)...

Forgetting me...

TIM - IN HIS CAR (PARKED)

sits behind the wheel. He looks into the rearview mirror, toward Renee's departing jeep.

RENEE - DRIVING THE JEEP

She looks into the rearview mirror, back at Tim's parked car in the mortuary lot, getting smaller and smaller in the distance.

RENEE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Remember me.

Renee's eyes fall back to the road ahead as she drives away.

FADE TO BLACK