

Distance

By

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OVER BLACK:

Via telephone:

TANYA

You're sure about this?

EMMA

I think so.

TANYA

I mean, it makes sense,
but...you're sure it's the right
time?

EMMA

I just...I don't know anymore.

INT. THEO'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

It's raining outside. The pitter-patter on the windows and the distant booming thunder fabricate a sense of tranquility under the shelter of a roof. Inside the small, dimly lit and scarcely furnished room, EMMA (26) is propped up on the bed, reading a book using the light of a small desk lamp that sits on the side table. She has a gentle smirk across her lips. Her small suitcase is open next to the bed, still fairly full with few items removed. THEO (26) knocks on the bedroom door before entering.

THEO

Hey Emma, lunch is ready.

EMMA

Okay, I'll be there in a second.

THEO

Chili's only good when it's hot.

EMMA

Let me finish this chapter. Two
pages left.

Theo looks at the suitcase briefly.

THEO (CONT'D)

You didn't unpack?

Without removing her eyes from the book, Emma replies honestly.

EMMA

I'm not staying long. We're at my
parents' tomorrow, and it's girl's
night on Sunday. Why would I
unpack?

Theo waits in the doorway for a pregnant moment before
sliding on the bed next to Emma. He pulls the book from her
hands, gently laying it next to them, and kisses her neck.
Emma closes her eyes. He kisses her cheek.

EMMA (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Lunch's getting cold.

THEO

(whispering)

Lunch can wait.

Theo continues kissing her and she casually slips out of his
embrace.

EMMA

Lets go eat. I'm hungry.

Theo begrudgingly stops, recognizing the moment is over
before it began. Emma gets up from the bed and leaves the
room.

INT. EMMA'S PARENTS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING

Emma's mother BEATRICE (55) is busy in the kitchen,
preparing a meal. Emma's brother VICTOR (22) enters to grab
cutlery from the drawers, then leaves (he's setting the
table in the adjacent room). Beatrice leans out of the
kitchen doorway.

BEATRICE

(calling out)

Edgar? I need to use the water!

EDGAR (OS)

(muffled)

Hold on a second! I can't hear you!
Say that again!

BEATRICE

(louder)

I need to use the water!

EDGAR (OS)
(clearer)
Ok. I'll be done in a second!

Beatrice returns to the stove and opens the lid to a big pot, releasing a cloud of steam that puffs upwards. She stirs the contents of the pot with a big wooden spoon. EDGAR (58) enters the kitchen. Beatrice looks over her shoulder at him.

BEATRICE
Is it safe to use the water?

Edgar opens the refrigerator and grabs a bottle of water.

EDGAR
Yeah. But I can't seem to fix the faucet down there. It just keeps drippin'. Might have to call Dominic.

BEATRICE
Good idea.

EDGAR
Where's the address book?

Beatrice turns on the water in the sink and begins washing cook-ware and cutting boards in the sink.

BEATRICE
Try looking on the shelf. I think I put it over there.

Edgar finds it and flips through it as Victor enters again, this time grabbing some glasses from the cupboard.

BEATRICE
Victor, use the new glasses from the dinette.

Victor obediently puts the glasses in his hands back and leaves the kitchen.

EDGAR
I can't find Dominic's number.

BEATRICE
It should be there Edgar.

EDGAR
Beatrice, It ain't here.

BEATRICE
Did you look under "M"?

EDGAR
Why would I look under "M" if his
name's Dominic?

BEATRICE
His last name starts with "M".

EDGAR
You think I remember his last name?

Edgar flips to "M" and looks through the pages.

EDGAR (CONT'D)
Maybe I need new glasses or
something, but I can't find no
Dominic here.

BEATRICE
Try looking for Brenda McHale.

Edgar shuts the book in frustration.

EDGAR
Ahh forget it. I'll ask Emma when
she gets here. She said 7-ish,
right?

BEATRICE
Yep.

Edgar takes a glance at the clock: **7:15**.

EDGAR (OS)
It's after seven, think they hit a
detour?

BEATRICE
They'll get here when they get
here. The weather's lousy tonight.

EDGAR
Wish she would have chosen a better
weekend to visit.

BEATRICE
It's the only time she could take
off from the restaurant.

EDGAR

I know, I know, it just would have been better if she came last week or something.

BEATRICE

I'm sure she would have liked to.

The doorbell rings as if on cue. Edgar springs up.

INT. EMMA'S PARENTS' HOUSE - HALLWAY - EVENING

The doorbell rings again, just as Edgar flicks on the hallway lights and opens the door with an excited smile.

Emma is standing by herself holding a colourful, cake box.

EDGAR

Emma!

EMMA

Dad!

Emma puts the cake on a nearby table and jumps into her father's arms for a snug hug.

EDGAR

How've you been sweetheart?

EMMA

I'm okay. It's be nice to get away from the restaurant for a few days.

Edgar smiles wide.

EDGAR

Where's Theo?

EMMA

Oh, he's just parking down the street. I didn't want to walk in the cold.

EDGAR

Alright...he could have just parked in the driveway. Come on in. *Make yourself at home*, haha.

As Emma takes off her coat, Beatrice enters with Victor following.

BEATRICE

Emma! My baby! I've missed you!

EMMA

I've missed you too mom!

Beatrice kisses her on the cheek then gives her a warm, motherly hug. While still embraced, Emma sees Victor.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Oh my god Victor! Your hair is so long!

VICTOR

Haha, hey Em.

Victor gives her a hug too.

EMMA

I can't get over this hair.

The doorbell rings again. Beatrice opens the door. It's Theo.

BEATRICE

Hi Theo! it's so nice to see you.

Theo enters awkwardly. He doesn't hug anyone. Instead, he raises his hand and nods his head to greet them.

THEO

You too Mrs. Larsson. Hi Mr. Larsson. Victor.

BEATRICE

Come on in, let me take your coats.

Emma picks up the cake.

EMMA

Here mom, I'll put it in the fridge. It's your favourite.

Beatrice smiles.

INT. EMMA'S PARENTS' HOUSE - DINING ROOM - EVENING

The family is sitting and finishing their meal at the table. Everyone is enthralled by the story Emma is telling.

EMMA

And then Jake kind of spun around
and knocked aaaall the plates out
of Susan's hands! They shattered on
the counter and a shard went right
through my arm!

Laughing, Emma lifts her sleeve to show a large bandage near
her elbow.

EMMA (CONT'D)

I bled more than any of us
expected. Might leave a small scar.

VICTOR

Then what happened?

EMMA

I bled all over the onions. Jake
had to throw them out and like,
disinfect the whole kitchen. Both
he and Susan felt so bad. We were
stuck cleaning up plate shards all
night.

BEATRICE

No stitches?

EMMA

Nope! I was surprised! But it's way
better now.

Theo puts his hand on Emma's -- a gesture of comfort.

THEO

All that matters is that you're
okay.

Theo's hand lingers, and Emma moves hers away to pour
herself a glass of water. Edgar sees through this.

EDGAR

I hurt myself too.

Edgar shows his bandaged thumb.

EDGAR

Not nearly as bad, but I pricked my
thumb the other day trying to fix
the locknut under the faucet in the
basement. At first it started
wiggling. Then last week, the whole
faucet came loose and now, the damn

thing won't stop dripping. Anyway, I know this is all boring plumbing stuff, but I need to call Tanya's dad to help me, and your mother lost his phone number.

BEATRICE

What! I haven't touched it!

Edgar winks.

EDGAR

I know, I just wanted to push your buttons.

(to Emma)

Point is, it's missing from the address book, and I was hoping you could give me their number later.

Victor laughs. So does Emma.

EMMA

Sure dad.

EDGAR

Thanks. Theo, mind passing the mashed potatoes?

Theo does.

EMMA

Victor, How's school going?

VICTOR

Ummmm, I'm failing my second year Calculus, but I made the university swim team!

Edgar spoons a heap of mashed potatoes into his plate.

EDGAR

Swim practice won't boost your math scores Victor. Engineering is a serious degree. While we're very proud of your athletic achievements, don't forget about your long term goals.

VICTOR

I know. I'm doing my best. Can I get some mashed potatoes too?

Edgar hands them to Victor.

EDGAR

How about you, Theo? Emma mentioned that you guys just moved?

THEO

Yeah, We found a nice small apartment. It's a bit far from work though. Don't get me wrong, It was nice to be close, but for the price I bought at, I'm not worried about the commute.

Emma drinks a sip of water from her glass.

EDGAR

How long is it?

THEO

About an hour if there's no traffic. Not bad, all things considering. The only thing I'm missing is getting to come home to Emma every night.

Theo glances at Emma as he says this, who puts on a fake smile. He reaches for her hand again, but she dodges it and stands up.

EMMA

Anyone want tea? Dessert? Coffee?

Emma hastily begins clearing the table of plates and cutlery.

BEATRICE

Honey, don't bother. Let me do that. Sit down.

EMMA

Nonsense. Theo will help me...
(to Theo)
won't you?

She gives Theo another fake smile. Theo stands and takes a few glasses. Emma walks off towards the kitchen and Theo follows. The awkwardness is not lost on the others. They know something is up.

INT. EMMA'S PARENTS' HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING

Emma sets her plates on the counter top near the sink. Theo enters and places the cups down.

THEO
Everything alright?

EMMA
I don't know Theo, is it?

THEO
What do you mean? What's wrong?

EMMA
Nothing. Everything's fine.

There is a pregnant pause between the two, as they look into each other's eyes with intensity. Theo moves in and tries to kiss Emma, who turns her face so he kisses her cheek.

THEO
What... Wanna go home?

EMMA
I am home.

THEO
Em...

EMMA
Yeah. I think I'm going to stay here.

THEO
Where is this coming from?

She is silent, contemplating something.

THEO (CONT'D)
Hmm?

EMMA
...yeah...that's not what
I...nevermind...

Theo takes both her hands. She lets him.

THEO
Look at me.

Emma does.

THEO (CONT'D)
I get it. You're homesick. But it's
only temporary. You'll come back
occasionally.

Emma is silent. She nods because she can't do anything else.

THEO (CONT'D)
I love you.

EMMA
Everyone's waiting for dessert. I
don't want them to get suspicious
of how long we've been in here.

THEO
Em...

She slides out of Theo's grip.

EMMA (CONT'D)
(calling out)
Victor, come in here a minute. Help
me bring the cake. Mom, dad, who
wants coffee? Who wants tea?

BEATRICE (OS)
Coffee for dad, green tea for me
please.

Victor enters as Emma pulls the cake out of the
refrigerator. Theo leans up against the counter and watches
Emma open the cake box with his arms crossed.

EMMA
(to Theo)
Go finish clearing the table.

Theo hesitates and reluctantly leaves the kitchen.

INT. EMMA'S PARENT'S HOUSE - EVENING - HALLWAY

Everyone is standing by the door. Emma and Theo are already
in their coats, ready to leave.

THEO
Alright, I'll go grab the car.
Thanks so much for dinner Mrs.
Larsson. It was great seeing
everyone again.

BEATRICE

Oh you know you're always welcome.
My door's always open.

THEO

Goodnight.

Theo leaves, shutting the door behind him. Emma immediately shifts from showing a bright, forced smile to shedding tears.

BEATRICE

Honey, what's wrong?

Beatrice comforts her by giving her a hug.

EMMA

Nothing.

BEATRICE

We can tell something's not right.

Emma exhales deeply.

EMMA

Is it okay if we don't talk about
it?

EDGAR

Sweetheart, from a father to his
daughter...sometimes, when you've
got a band-aid on, and you're done
healing, your skin needs to breathe
some fresh air. Sometimes you need
to just rip the bandaid off. None
of this hair-by-hair slow bullshit.
Do what you need to do, but don't
waste anyone's time and don't
prolong the inevitable. We love
you, and we understand.

Edgar hugs Emma. Emma closes her eyes.

EMMA

I love you too.

She wipes the tears from her eyes and composes herself.

EMMA (CONT'D)

I'm gonna try to visit more often.
I don't know how, but I'll try.

BEATRICE
We're not going anywhere.

Theo honks the horn to signal that he's outside.

EMMA
Ok. I'll see you soon. Thanks again
for everything. Goodnight.

EDGAR
Have a safe flight.

EMMA
I'll call.

Emma leaves. Edgar slowly shuts the door then opens it
hastily, calling out:

EDGAR
Wait! What's Dominic Machale's
phone number!?

CUT TO: BLACK