

Cloudy Days

Written by:

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EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DARK MISERABLE EVENING

A couple in the glow of house lights, hurry down the street, huddled close together under an umbrella.

INT. LIVING ROOM - A HOUSE THE COUPLE WALK PAST

JOHN spoon feeds his disabled daughter HELEN. He holds a bowl of food and a spoon hovering mid-air. She chews very slowly, then spits it out slowly.

TV (O.S.)

...after the break our Valentine's night movie special is 'Casablanca'. So snuggle up close and enjoy...

JOHN

OK love, no more. It's your night.

He cleans her chin with the spoon and stands up.

INT. KITCHEN

John walks wearily to the sink, side stepping laundry piled by the washing machine, he places the bowl on top of overflowing dishes. Collapsing onto a chair he surveys the scene in despair, his eyes rest on a notice board covered in photos, they sweep over old happy pictures of him, a woman and a baby, him with the woman and a toddler in a wheelchair, then more of only him and a growing up Helen. He fixes his gaze on a newer picture of the woman, older now, tanned and glamorous, clearly in a foreign country.

JOHN (SOFTLY)

You couldn't even try for today? (beat)
'Too free a spirit to fit into this
life,' wasn't that it?

INT. LIVING ROOM

John walks in smiling broadly he's holding a birthday cake, he switches off the light, a giant 30th candle flickers in the dark, he walks to Helen.

JOHN (SINGING)

Happy Birthday to you...

John holds the cake to Helen who claps excitedly.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 Now make a wish love... (beat)
 ...ok (beat)... one, two, three...

John sits down and blows the candles, Helen laughs.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 Oh so what did you wish for cheeky?!
 We've got a card here to open too...

John opens the card, forcing a smile.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 It's from Mum! My dear Helen, have a
 fabulous day, Lots of Love Mum...
 (beat)and George. Oh and big kisses!

John hands card to Helen, who looks at it happily.

JOHN (CONT'D)
 We'll have cake later eh? Yea. Right now
 lets get you comfy for your movie. Guess
 what? Yup. You know.

John moves Helen from her chair to the sofa. Sitting beside her he presses the remote, the music starts, Helen laughs. John stares blankly out the window as another couple pass by. He stands up suddenly and pulls the curtains shut. Sitting down next to Helen again, they lock eyes, the gaze held, Helen dunts his shoulder with her body and kisses his chin awkwardly. John hugs Helen tight closing his eyes.

JOHN (SOFTLY)
 You big daft softie you...eh...

He gently sits her up and walks into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN

John, smiling, teary eyed, takes a beer and a bottle of coke from the fridge. Pouring coke into a beaker, he stops mid pour shaking his head dreamily, he finishes pouring. Walking out, he stops and wistfully touches the photo of the woman.

JOHN
 Hope you found a fit as good as mine

INT. LIVING ROOM

John sits next to Helen and takes her hand, smiling.