

**Madison & Church**

by

Steven Clark

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Phone 631.456.2752

Email SAClark69@verizon.net

FADE IN:

**INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Snow falls outside a frosted window. A flickering street light casts an orange glow on the rock posters and baseball pennants that hang on the walls.

A long forgotten TEDDY BEAR sits alone in a far corner.

CONNOR DAVIS, 12, sprawled out under the covers, sleeps. His eyes suddenly snap open.

CONNOR

Who's there?

No answer save for the howling wind outside.

He pulls back the covers, slides his feet into a pair of slippers, and walks slowly into the HALLWAY. He stops when he reaches another --

BEDROOM

An alarm clock's light provides the room a green tint.

Asleep on the bed, back to Connor, is MARY, 37. Her long dark hair spread across the pillow, she whimpers softly and rolls over. A bare arm comes to rest on the empty space beside her.

Connor watches her for awhile, then quietly retreats to his own bedroom and the comfort of his bed.

CONNOR'S ROOM

He grabs a planetarium projector from off the floor, switches it on. Planets and stars fill the ceiling above. Saturn with its rings, Jupiter, Mars, the Sun, the Ear--

*THUMP!*

The noise, like something fell, comes from inside the --

CLOSET

Connor's eyes widen as a white glow blossoms around the edges of the door, dim at first, then brighter. He shields his eyes, but dares to peek through a slit in his fingers.

The knob turns, luminous fingers slide out, and the door swings wide.

Imbued in light is a beautiful FAIRY PRINCESS. Her face perfectly young, she wears a flowing gown that gleams like a fiber optic tree. Her golden hair blows gently in an unseen breeze.

In her hand, a sparkling wand.

FAIRY PRINCESS

Don't be frightened, young one. For I come with glad tidings. Believe in me now, for in just a few short years you'll be a man, and you'll no longer believe in things like me.

Her gentle voice sets Connor at ease and he lowers his hands from his face.

CONNOR

Who are you?

She smiles.

FAIRY PRINCESS

That matters not. What matters is that you believe, for I have come with a great gift.

Connor dares to sit up, fear turns to curiosity. The planetarium projector falls to the floor and shuts off.

FAIRY PRINCESS

What do you wish for most?

CONNOR

I- I don't know...

FAIRY PRINCESS

You know. Think. For I am one to grant  
you that wish.

Connor is transfixed by her warm radiance, then --

CONNOR

Madison and Church.

She nods knowingly, but when she speaks, caution.

FAIRY PRINCESS

You must be sure, young one. What was  
once done will now be undone.

CONNOR

I am sure. I... I want my father back.  
I wanna be happy again.

The Fairy Princess nods, blows him a soft kiss as darkness  
engulfs the room.

FAIRY PRINCESS (V.O.)

(echoing)

Are you ready..?

**EXT. FRONT PORCH - DAY**

Connor, two years younger in shorts and a t-shirt, opens the  
door and bounds down the steps. The trees and bushes are  
springtime green.

From inside the house --

MARY (O.S.)

Don't stay out too long. Dinner's  
almost ready and your father'll be  
home soon.

CONNOR

Okay, mom.

He grabs a skateboard off the grass, tucks it under his arm  
and heads down the tree-lined street.

He comes to a --

HOUSE

A big old Victorian encircled with an array of colorful flowers and shrubbery.

A boy, DEVLIN, 12, dashes out the door holding a skateboard.

DEVLIN

Hey, Con! We going?

Connor glances at his friend, then looks to the sky, where dark clouds encroach on the sun. A sour look appears on his face.

CONNOR

No. I think it's gonna rain. We should go somewhere else.

DEVLIN

I thought we were gonna skate. They just opened the new park behind the library.

CONNOR

No, not today. Come on.

Connor drops his board on the lawn. Devlin does likewise, and hesitantly follows.

**EXT. MADISON AVENUE - LATER**

Madison is a trendy main drag with eateries, galleries and specialty stores, all with brownstone apartments above.

Afternoon rush hour traffic stops and goes, people ramble busily down the sidewalk. The boys deftly walk among them.

Connor watches the street names as he goes. SUE ELLEN, PROMENADE, EAST LANDING. Then finally --

CHURCH STREET

He stops and looks up.

DEVLIN

Why are we stopping here?

The sky is now a dark, sickly green. The kind that brings fierce spring rains.

CONNOR

I don't know. But I think I need to be here.

DEVLIN

What are you talking about?

CONNOR

Shh...

On the other side of Madison is a PEDESTRIAN SIGNAL with a thirty second countdown.

The signal *BEEPS*. 3...2...1... The word GO flashes solid GREEN, and people cross.

CONNOR

Something's gonna happen, Dev. I can feel it.

DEVLIN

What's gonna happen? What are you talking about?

A few moments pass. The traffic signal flashes YELLOW as the last of the pedestrians hurry along.

CONNOR

Stay right here. Don't move.

But Devlin doesn't listen. Instead, he spies a CANDY STORE across Madison as the first few drops of rain begin to fall.

An attractive WOMAN, 30s, brushes past Connor. She holds the hand of a LITTLE BOY. They start out into the street as the signal turns RED.

CONNOR

No! Wait!

Connor races over. He tugs the sleeve of her jacket and pulls her back.

The woman, startled, looks down at Connor.

WOMAN

What?

CONNOR

The light's red, lady. You can't cross yet.

She looks at the traffic signal.

WOMAN

Oh. Thank you. Jeez...

At the light of Madison and Church, impatient drivers sit behind the wheels of their cars. Anxious to be on their way, they hit the gas as the light turns GREEN.

Time slows to a crawl as the woman and the little boy stride safely onto the sidewalk. A voice calls out to Connor.

In the middle of the street is Devlin, waving.

DEVLIN

Connor, come on! Let's get some--

Tires *SCREECH*, heads turn... A sickening *THUD!*

CONNOR

Devlin!

A sedan jerks to a halt.

Connor runs out into the street. He's narrowly missed by an oncoming SUV.

There, in the middle of the road, is --

Devlin's body. The young boy's legs are impossibly twisted. His head, in a pool of blood, slowly turns from side-to-side as he gasps for air.

Connor opens his mouth to scream, but manages only a whimper. He shuts his eyes tight.

A door belonging to the car that hit Devlin swings open.

JOE (O.S.)

Connor!

Two strong hands take Connor by the shoulders. The boy opens his tear filled eyes to see his father, JOE, 40, kneeling in front of him.

JOE

Connor! What are you doing here? Is that Devlin? Is that Devlin?

(looks over his shoulder)

Oh, Christ, it is. What the hell were you two doing out here?

Connor just sobs.

CONNOR

I... I was just trying to help.

JOE

Shit. Stay here.

A crowd has gathered. Joe pushes past them, looks over Devlin's motionless body and grimaces. The boy's pale blue eyes blink furiously.

JOE

Devlin, can you hear me? Devlin?

Devlin coughs, his voice barely above a whisper.

DEVLIN

Candy...

JOE

What? Devlin, I... I don't know what you're... Somebody call an ambulance! An ambulance, goddammit!

DEVLIN

Where's my mommy? I want mommy.

Devlin's eyes stop blinking, but they remain open.

He's dead.

Joe rises, takes a few steps back and covers his mouth. He retreats to Connor, who stands alone amidst a throng of onlookers. Joe scoops him up, squeezes him tight.

JOE

(softly to himself)

Christ, what the hell were you doing out here?

CONNOR

We were going to the library, daddy. We were supposed to...

JOE

Shh...

Joe can't tear his gaze away from the horrific scene.

The rain falls harder, sirens wail in the distance. Blue and red police lights reflect off the slick asphalt.

Connor, in Joe's arms, looks over to the sidewalk. There, still holding the little boy's hand, is the woman from before. Their eyes meet, then --

Without warning, all motion at the scene STOPS. Cars come to a halt, people freeze in their tracks. The light above Madison and Church displays a solid RED.

Only the rain continues as --

The Fairy Princess steps out from behind the woman with the little boy, a somber expression on her face.

Connor, trapped in his father's embrace, speaks without moving his lips --

CONNOR (V.O.)

This is not what I wanted. This can't be...

She looks at him, then gazes to the sky.

Connor looks up. The storm clouds, merged in one dark mass, fade into --

**INT. HOUSE - DAY**

Connor enters the living room through a hallway. He wears a baseball cap and carries a mitt, but he's decidedly hesitant as he approaches --

a man from behind, sitting in a recliner.

The TV is on, some show plays. It's nonsense, but it doesn't matter anyway. The man's not paying attention.

CONNOR

Dad?

No response.

CONNOR

Dad? Y-You wanna have a catch?

Joe sports a three day growth, his glazed eyes unfocused and watery. He turns to Connor with his lips slightly parted, as if to speak... only there are no words.

Mary appears from the kitchen, motions with her hand.

MARY

Connor, your father's very tired. Come on.

She goes to Connor, his head lowered and confused, and takes him by the hand. They go outside.

Joe slowly looks down. Between his legs, an empty beer bottle.

He grasps it.

OUTSIDE

Connor winds and throws a ball to his mother --

*CRASH!*

Mary whips around. The ball sails past her, rolls to a stop on the edge of the grass.

She rushes inside.

MARY (O.S.)

Joe! Jesus Christ, Joe...

Mary's hushed voice from inside tries to console him.

Connor's glove slides from his hand. He takes a few steps back, then goes into an all-out sprint. He runs out of the yard and down the street.

Arms pumping, teeth gritted. He keeps running, running... away from the pain.

From another room in the house, a BABY begins to cry.

DISSOLVE TO:

**INT. BEDROOM - MORNING**

Connor's room is awash in sunlight. He lies in his bed, covers pulled up. He opens his eyes.

CONNOR

Who's there?

Mary stands in the doorway, an amused look on her face.

MARY

Rise and shine, honey. Wait'll you see your sister.

Connor rubs his eyes, swings his legs over the side of the bed, slides his feet into a pair of slippers. He looks out the window. Freshly fallen snow blankets everything in sight.

MARY'S ROOM

Mary smiles at Connor as he walks in.

MARY

Look at your sister. She dressed up  
just for you.

Behind her is MARNIE, 2. She wears a pink fairy princess outfit and holds a star-tipped wand. She giggles and spins, her curly blonde hair trailing.

MARNIE

I'm a fairy princess!  
(waves the wand)  
Big brother, big brother!

Marnie squeals with delight, then quickly bolts the room.

Mary picks up a laundry basket and places it on the bed.

MARY

Was cleaning some stuff when I found  
that outfit. Used to be mine when I  
was her age.  
(laughs)  
I can't believe I still had it.

Silence.

MARY

(off Connor)  
What's wrong?

He shakes his head.

CONNOR

Nothing.

MARY

She looks up to you, you know? She loves you a lot.

CONNOR

Yeah, I know... Mom?

MARY

Yes?

Mary folds laundry on the bed.

CONNOR

Was dad a hero?

This stops her mid-fold.

MARY

Well, yeah. You know he served in Iraq. He did a lot of good things when he was over there.

CONNOR

No. I mean... that day. Madison and Church.

MARY

Oh.

She sits on the bed.

MARY

Yeah. I think so. He swerved to avoid hitting that woman and her boy. He gave his life to save them.

Connor ponders this.

CONNOR

Do you wish things were different?

MARY

Wha-- How do you mean?

CONNOR

Do you sometimes wish he'd hit that lady? I mean, he'd still be alive, you know? He'd be here with us and...

She gets down in front of him.

MARY

Of course not. Connor, your father did a very brave thing that day. That's the kind of man he was. I miss him as much as you do, but that's what made him so special. It's what makes him being gone so hard to understand sometimes.

CONNOR

Yeah, I guess.

MARY

It gets easier, Connor. You know? I mean, it may not feel like it right now, but it will... eventually. And you know what? I see him in you. Every day you wake, I look into your eyes and I see him.

Connor lowers his head.

Suddenly, a CRY from outside. They leave the bedroom to see what's wrong. In the --

LIVING ROOM

Marnie sits on the floor, she holds her knee.

MARY

Honey, what happened?

MARNIE

(through tears)  
My knee, my knee...

CONNOR

Can you stand?

MARNIE

Yeah.

He takes her by the hand.

CONNOR

Come on.

She snuffles as he leads her to the BATHROOM. He props her up on the toilet seat and carefully rolls up her pink tights. There's a little red mark on her knee.

CONNOR

Is that where you hurt yourself?

MARNIE

Uh huh.

CONNOR

Okay.

Mary, arms folded, leans against the door frame. A tender smile emerges on her face as she watches on.

Connor reaches into the medicine cabinet, pulls out a box. He kneels in front of his sister, takes a bandage and gingerly applies it to her knee.

CONNOR

How's that? Oh wait--

Before Marnie can answer, Connor dashes out of the room.

Marnie looks to Mary, who shrugs.

Connor reappears, holding his old teddy bear. He gives it over to Marnie, kisses her on the forehead.

CONNOR

See? Good as new.

FADE OUT.