

SADNESS UNDONE

By

Rajesh Bhardwaj

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INT. OFFICE - DAY

It's a busy office, phones ringing, people typing away and general chatter among colleagues.

The CAMERA pans through the many DESKS of the office that are facing each other. We come to STEVEN MANNING's desk.

Steven is short, wears glasses and a bit overweight, although he is in the process of losing his weight. He is an optimistic man who always has a smile on his face. He sits at his desk on the PHONE.

STEVEN

(On Phone)

Yeah, hi. Can I speak with the Accounts Manager please?

(Beat)

Thank You!

While he waits on the phone he takes a sip of his COFFEE and pushes his GLASSES. He smiles at a young woman in her thirties opposite him, this is EVELYN.

STEVEN

(On Phone)

Oh, hello there. I have an invoice here and I wanted to trace the payment.

(Beat)

Oh, that's great! That confirms it for me. Bye!

He hangs up and types on his COMPUTER.

STEVEN

(To himself)

That is done!

DANNY FOREMAN approaches Steven, he is wearing a sweater vest and black striped pants. Danny is Steven's boss but for many years now they have been best of friends than co-workers.

DANNY

(To Steven)

Hey Steve, did you watch the game last night?

STEVEN

Oh, what a game!

(Beat)

So, did you win?

DANNY

Got five hundred big ones!

STEVEN

Jesus! So what you gonna do
with it?

DANNY

I was thinking, drinks at
lunch.

STEVEN

You're on, brother!

They high-five and then Danny leaves. Evelyn
types on her computer and then looks over at
Steven.

EVELYN

So, what you're doing for
Thanksgiving?

STEVEN

Oh, I've got my family coming
over. You?

EVELYN

I'm going South to my mother's.
(Sarcastic)
How exiting!

STEVEN

Hey, it won't be that bad.
What's better than being with
your family on Thanksgiving?

EVELYN

I guess!

(Then)

You don't know my family. If they were to be voted for America's worst family, then the vote goes to them!

STEVEN

Come on! If you feel it's that bad then you know there's an extra plate for you at my place.

EVELYN

Oh, thanks honey.

Steven gives her a reassuring smile. Evelyn smiles and feels better about her self. Steven stands up as if he was to make an announcement.

STEVEN

Tea? Coffee anyone? I'm going now and if you don't ask then it'll be too late!

EVELYN

Are you paying, Steve?

STEVEN

I though you were gonna pay that's why I asked! That's my aim every time I ask!

EVELYN

(Jokingly)
Cheap bastard!

CUT TO:

INT. COFFEE MACHINE - DAY

Steven queues behind an old man with silver hair who is waiting for his CUP OF COFFEE to be poured, this is SID BRAMWELL.

STEVEN

Hey Sid!

SID

Steven! How are ya?

STEVEN
Another day!

SID
Watch the game?

STEVEN
Oh, yeah! Great game, huh?

SID
We were on fire!

Sid takes his coffee from the machine.

SID
Well, I'll see ya!

STEVEN
Take it easy!
(As Sid walks)
We should go for a couple of
beers.

SID
Yeah. Yeah.
(Under his breath)
Jackoff!

Steven hears this but smiles and presses a bunch of buttons on the COFFEE MACHINE.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Evelyn types away on her KEYBOARD. Stevens phone rings. She answers it.

EVELYN
(On Phone)
Hello, CaliTech. This is
Evelyn.
(Beat)
He's on a coffee break right
now. Can I take a message?

She grabs a brick of post-it notes and begins writing.

EVELYN
OK. I'll make sure he get's the
message.

She hangs up.

Steven arrives at this desk with two coffee cups.

STEVEN
(Hands her the cup)
There you go.

EVELYN
Your sister called. She said it
was urgent. Something about
your mom.

She peels a post-it note from the brick and hands it to
him.

Steven briefly reads it and then begins dialing on his
phone.

STEVEN
(On Phone)
Hi, Jean? How are ya sis?

JEAN (O.S)
Steve, honey how are you?

STEVEN
(On Phone)
I'm doing good. What's up?

JEAN (O.S)
It's mom. She had a stroke this
morning. It's pretty bad.

Silence. Steven doesn't say anything as the news soaks
in.

Evelyn sees something is wrong on Steven's face.

JEAN (O.S)
Steve? You there?

STEVEN
Yeah! Which hospital is she at?

JEAN (O.S)
She's at St. Mary's. Ward 10.

Steven writes on the post-it note.

STEVEN

OK.

JEAN (O.S)

Are you OK?

STEVEN

I'm alright. How are you?

JEAN (O.S)

I'm not doing so good.

(Voice breaks to cry)

I...I don't want mom to...I can't even say it!

STEVEN

Hey! Come on now. Everything will be fine.

JEAN (O.S)

When can you come over?

STEVEN

I'll catch a flight tonight and be there for tomorrow.

Steven hangs up. Evelyn looks at him with her almost sympathetic eyes.

EVELYN

How is she?

STEVEN

She had a stroke. Pretty bad one.

EVELYN

I'm sorry, honey.

STEVEN

She'll be fine.

Evelyn sees right through him. The pain in his eyes gives him away but Steven smiles bravely.

STEVEN

She'll be fine.

(Beat)

Who want's a donut?

EVELYN

Look, it'll be fine.

STEVEN

I know. So who want's a donut
because I'm going.

Evelyn stares at him.

STEVEN

What'll it be? Chocolate?
Sprinkles?

(Then: Quoting Homer
Simpson)

Mmmm, Donuts!

Evelyn forces a smile.

STEVEN

Chocolate?

(Knowing Evelyn's choice)

Yeah, chocolate.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY

Steven is on his flight to see his mother.

A YOUNG KID sits next to him listening to his IPOD with
the music blasting through his HEADPHONES.

A FLIGHT ATTENDANT walks past him pushing a DRINKS CART.

STEVEN

(To attendant)

Excuse me? How long before we
land?

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

We land in twenty minutes time,
sir.

(Then)

Would you like a drink?

STEVEN

Yeah, sure. Could I get a Coke
please?

She picks a can of Coke and hands it to him.

STEVEN

Thanks.

CUT TO:

INT. ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL FRONT DESK - DAY

Steven walks into the hospital through the sliding doors that lead to the front desk.

CUT TO:

INT. CLARICE'S WARD - DAY

CLARICE MANNING, an old woman reaching her sixties, lies with her eyes closed on a bed in the centre of the room. She seems like a wise woman who's had a good life supported from her family and this image doesn't quite fit her.

Steven looks at his mother for a while when an attractive woman in her late thirties enters the room, this is JEAN MANNING.

Jean sees her brother standing and emotionally hugs him.

STEVEN

Hey, sis. How is she?

JEAN

She's under sedation. The doctor said she's stable but critical.

(Then)

It's so good you came. I don't know if I could handle this on my own.

STEVEN

Hey, everything will be fine.

JEAN

Jesus! Would you stop saying that! She is not fine. She critical!

Steven looks at his mother one more time.

STEVEN

She'll be fine.

Jean scoffs and breaks away from their hug.

CUT TO:

INT. CLARICE'S WARD - SEVERAL MINUTES LATER

Steven sits next to his mother on a brown LEATHER CHAIR. He sits and thinks about her and times he had with her. For once we see Steven in a serious mood rather than the one we have seen before.

Jean enters the room with two cups of COFFEE in her hand. She hands one to Steven.

STEVEN

Thanks.

In the midst of this situation, Jean attempts to make small talk.

JEAN

So, how's work?

STEVEN

Work? Why? What've you heard?

Steven smiles and then laughs.

JEAN

Nothing.

Silence. Then -

STEVEN

I might get a promotion.

JEAN

Oh, that's good.

STEVEN

The boss thinks I'm due for one. Then I'm getting that bike!

JEAN

Jeez! You and bikes!

STEVEN

I'm looking at the BMW bike. What a beauty! The other day I was checking it out in a magazine and I swear I was drooling!

JEAN

Ugh!

They both smile at each other and then look onto their mother reminding them why they are here.

JEAN

Have you ever thought about this time?

STEVEN

What time?

JEAN

You know.

Steven still doesn't get it.

JEAN

Don't make me say it!

STEVEN

(Quietly)

Jean, mom's not gonna die.

As he says those words even he knows it is a lie.

CUT TO:

SEVERAL MINUTES LATER

Steven sits on next to his mother flipping the pages of a MAGAZINE. He finds a page and begins reading it.

Suddenly intense beeps are heard from the machines hooked up to Clarice. Steven is frightened but remains calm. He presses the call button.

STEVEN

(Shouts)

Somebody! Doctor! Nurse!

A NURSE rushes in and pushes Steven to one side. Two more nurses rush in and begin CPR.

Steven stands their and watches them pump hard into his mothers chest as she lays there.

Jean enters to see the nurses doing CPR on Clarice. She begins to cry.

JEAN

Is it time? Is this it?

Steven stands and watches his sister curdle up and sob. He can't stand it and runs out of the room.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. CLARICE'S ROOM - DAY

Steven stands against the room door and watches Jean and doctors through the glass on the door.

A doctor goes past him into the room.

A long continuous beep resonates as the machine flat-lines.

The somber doctor comes out of the room.

DOCTOR

(To Steven)

I'm sorry. We did all we could.
Her heart just gave out.

STEVEN

Is there anything else you
could do?

DOCTOR

Sir, we have pronounced your
mother dead.

(Then)

I'm sorry.

STEVEN

Thank you, doctor. You have
done a great job.

Shocked at his calm and relaxed reaction, the doctor walks into the corridor.

CUT TO:

INT. CLARICE'S ROOM - DAY

Jean sits opposite Clarice's lifeless body, tears running down her face.

Steven enters the room. His focus is on his mother with not a tear in his eyes.

He hugs his sister as she sobs loudly on his shoulder.

FADE TO:

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

We are at Clarice's FUNERAL and it is a rainy day.

Steven stands arm in arms with Jean, who is looking directly at Clarice's PHOTO on the CASKET, a photo that shows Clarice's resilience back in the day.

A PRIEST is saying a few words.

PRIEST

Clarice was a vibrant woman,
full of tenderness. I'm sure
that her presence will be
missed by her loved ones. Lets
remember her as she was and
hold it in our hearts.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - DAY (ONE WEEK LATER)

Steven is at his desk, the hustle and bustle of the busy office is heard OFF SCREEN.

Steven types away on his computer. His phone rings and he answers it.

STEVEN

(To phone)

Hello, this is Steven. Yes, I
have that invoice and you
should get the figures
including this invoice soon.

(Beat)

OK, bye!

Evelyn watches him work.

EVELYN

So how are ya?

STEVEN

I'm fine. How are you? Have you
lost weight?

EVELYN

Maybe a few pounds. Listen -
(Quietly)
- If you wanna talk you know
I'm here right?

Steven nods his head reassuringly. Then -

STEVEN

Tea? Coffee?

EVELYN

(Fed up)
I'm fine. Go on, go!
(Imitates)
Coffee!

CUT TO:

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Steven has just got his order of coffee from the vendor. He goes through his WALLET to get money when he comes across and OLD PHOTO of his mother and him, a memorable moment in his life.

He stops and glares at the photo and begins reminiscing, maybe a flinch in his eyes to cry.

He comes out of his brief memory and pays the VENDOR.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - EVENING

Steven sits on the sand and watches the SUN set. A rare memory he shares with his mother when she was alive.

He takes out the OLD PHOTO from his WALLET and looks at it. He strokes his THUMB gently on the photo.

CUT TO:

PHOTO - CLOSE

The photo shows him and his mother in a momentary pose with smiles and a cheeky look on LITTLE STEVEN'S face.

CUT TO:

STEVEN

Steven watches the sun set in the distance. The orange glow from the SUN reflects on his face.

CUT TO:

SUN SETTING

The SUN set slowly into the ripples of the SEA.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A much younger Clarice sits at the beach with the young Steven we saw in the photo before.

Clarice and Steven hold hands and smile.

A younger Jean takes the photo of the two which becomes the pose in the photo.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - EVENING (PRESENT DAY)

Steven stands and watches the Sun completely set turning the SKY orange.

CUT TO:

STEVEN

Tears roll down Stevens face and he cries, quietly.

Jean comes behind him and sees him cry. She turns her attention towards the orange sky and holds onto his hand.

THE END

