

THE PROPHEPIC ANGEL

Written

By

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FADE IN:

INSERT: A CHILD'S DRAWING PAD

Clutching a well used pencil, a young HAND carefully finishes a picture of an open doorway filled with smoke.

It's the fifth door on the page - all with smoke.

The page is turned and the pencil begins a new sketch of a person, with one arm raised, as though it is waving.

It keeps drawing until...a POLICE SIREN...takes us to--

INT. CITY - BACKSTREET ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

--Filthy. Monotonous police sirens fill the neighborhood. It's the place nobody wants to go, let alone live.

Nestled in a doorway, wrapped in cardboard, sleeps EDWARD. Long beard with a face that looks more 65, than the 45 he is.

Two MEN in black suits, wearing rubber gloves, enter the alleyway. One Man grabs Edward's face.

MAN

This will do.

EDWARD

(waking)

Oi! Leave me alone.

They drag Edward toward an awaiting van.

INSERT: VIDEO SCREEN

A suited CEO addresses the camera - all tan and white teeth.

CEO

(somber)

Dementia is a curse facing the modern world. But here at Zeus Plc we are excited to report a radical new treatment is under trial, with some exciting results. Once complete we aim to help suffers...

(breaks into smile)

...remember themselves again.

BACK TO ALLEY: Edward is dragged up to the van kicking and fighting. He's thrown in and the door slides shut.

INT. CITY HOSPITAL - PATIENT ROOM - DAY

A sterile room with a small sink and a few seats around the hospital bed.

Edward, clean shaven, lies in the bed attached to a life support machine which emits a regular BEEP...BEEP...

A DOCTOR, 40, checks his file - something's not right.

The door swings open and in marches a stern looking LAWYER, 60, dark suit - means business.

LAWYER

Can we switch it off?

The Doctor studies the Lawyer with disdain.

DOCTOR

No. You lot may own this hospital but some rules still apply.

LAWYER

Why not? He's going to die.

DOCTOR

Well, he has a wife and child. Seems he was once a high flying accountant. His DNA's on file.

LAWYER

And if they agree?

DOCTOR

Christ! Yes, then it can. Why the rush? The drug testing hasn't finished and he wasn't a sufferer.

The Lawyer turns to leave.

LAWYER

He was in the control sample. Looks bad if we have an unexplained seizure. But, if this ends, we'll put it down to a sampling error.

DOCTOR

You know, he has some very unusual brain activity. It may show--

The door shuts.

INT. CITY HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - DAY

A busy corridor. MEDICAL STAFF scurry about.

With wide, innocent eyes, and drawing pad in hand, CLAIRE, 10, takes in the hustle and bustle of the hospital.

Dragging her by the hand is SUSAN, 40, dressed to impress and with more makeup than required. She's in a rush.

They pass a reception, with various flower displays, and reach Edward's room where the Doctor waits for them.

DOCTOR

Mrs Birch, welcome. Please come in.

EDWARD'S ROOM

They stand at the foot of the bed. Susan turns away.

Claire instinctively goes up to Edward's face and gently strokes his cheek.

When Susan notices she drags her back.

SUSAN

Stop it! I told you no attitude.

(points at chair in corner)

Sit down, draw, whatever.

Claire meekly sits down, opens her drawing pad. On the first page are the five doorways.

DOCTOR

I'm sorry for your husband's situation, Mrs Birch.

Susan paces at the foot of the bed - agitated.

SUSAN

I'm not. Walked out on us four years go. Haven't heard from him since. It's been a mess... Ok, let's cut to it. Will he die?

The Doctor turns his back to the child, speaks softly.

DOCTOR

Most likely. If we turn off the equipment it's likely he will deteriorate. However--

SUSAN

--what?

DOCTOR

Well, his brain activity is not a normal coma pattern--

SUSAN

--So? If he can't live, he can't live. How long do we wait?

The Doctor sighs - seems he's the only one who cares.

DOCTOR
I suggest a few days, but as you
are next of kin, it's your call.

CLAIRE
(looking at her pad)
Daddy can hear us, you know?

Both the Doctor and Susan jump back.

EXT. CORNFIELD - CLEARING - DAY

Edward, clean shaven and looking healthy, sits up from his hospital bed. He blinks, tries to take it in - confused.

Around him, as far as the eye can see, is fully grown corn.

EDWARD
What the...

SUSAN (V.O.)
Oh be quiet, Claire.

Edward's heads snaps upwards toward the somber sky above.

EDWARD
Claire!?

CLAIRE (V.O.)
But he can. Daddy can hear us.

Edward jumps out of bed. He spins around as though expecting to see people close by.

EDWARD
Claire? Susan?

He dashes into the corn, checks every row - nothing.

INT. CITY HOSPITAL - EDWARD'S ROOM - DAY

Susan raises her hands as though admitting defeat.

SUSAN
I told you I've had enough of your
weird talk. You're just like your
fath... God, I need a coffee.

She follows the Doctor out the room leaving Claire alone.

As the door shuts, Claire gets up and kneels next to the bed.

CLAIRE
Daddy...

INTERCUT: HOSPITAL ROOM and CORNFIELD

Edward: stares up at the sky - it turns a warm red colour.

EDWARD

Sweetie?

Claire: takes hold of Edward's hand.

CLAIRE

Daddy, I can't hear you but I think you hear me. I feel it.

Edward: chokes with emotion, tries to take it in.

EDWARD

It's Ok baby, I can hear you.

Claire: places Edward's hand to her forehead.

CLAIRE

I have a secret, Daddy. I can't tell Mummy. I see things that are going to happen. I feel them too.

EDWARD

Just like my deaf grandma. She saw things too. She taught me so much.

CLAIRE

I want to see you again, Daddy, but you're sick. You're in hospital.

Edward: considers the hospital bed.

EDWARD

Sick? Oh, I see. I missed you too. I never got the chance to say how much I--

CLAIRE

--I really hope you can hear me because I know what you have to do.

Edward: stops dead, listens closely.

CLAIRE

You have to remember, Daddy. Then I'll see you again. You must remember the day you left.

EDWARD

What! Look, sweetie, I'm so sorry, I can explain, but what can I do?

Claire: closes her eyes and breathes onto Edward.

Edward: The cornfield rustles with a breeze. The sun emerges and shines down on him. He soaks up the warmth.

EDWARD

Is that you, sweetie? I feel it.

CLAIRE

I see doors, Daddy. Use the doors.
They will lead you to me.

Edward: spins around - nothing's there.

EDWARD

Doors? Where? What doors?

Claire: lifts Edward's hand, kisses it.

Edward: feels something and slowly turns around. Behind him, up against the corn, rests a doorway - the door ajar.

A grey mist tumbles out. He stares at it - stunned.

CLAIRE

I need to speak to you. I don't understand my drawing. Please.

EDWARD

Ok, ok. On my way, sweetie.

Edward: after a deep breath he steps through the door into--

INT. CORPORATE OFFICE - BOARDROOM - DAY

--In front stands himself, a few years younger, with a worn out face. Opposite sits a panel of dour, grey haired MEN.

The scene is frozen with Edward able to walk around it.

EDWARD

Here!? I hated this place. They fired me because I was ill.

Edward studies the face of his younger self.

EDWARD

I had panic attacks, but they wouldn't help. They wouldn't listen. Nobody ever...listened.

CLAIRE (V.O.)

Look for the doors, Daddy.

Edward looks up. In the wall of the boardroom is a new door filled with a black mist. He heads toward it until--

SUSAN (V.O.)

What are you doing, Claire?

INT. CITY HOSPITAL - EDWARD'S ROOM - DAY

Susan strides from the door, hauls Claire away from Edward and pushes her into the corner seat.

CLAIRE

But, Mum--

SUSAN

Don't you 'but' me.

INT. CORPORATE OFFICE - BOARD ROOM - DAY

Whilst Edward's distracted by the argument the door starts to close behind him.

EDWARD

Susan! Leave her alone.

CLAIRE (V.O.)

--Don't stop, Daddy.

Edward notices the door's almost closed. He jumps across the table, dives over the Men into the doorway, landing on--

EXT. EDWARD'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

--a dirt road leading up to a large, clapboard timber house, with front porch. Around it... endless cornfields.

SUSAN (V.O.)

Claire, accept it. Your father is going to die.

Still winded by the fall, Edward sits up covered in dirt.

EDWARD

Fuck you, Susan.

INT. CITY HOSPITAL - EDWARD'S ROOM - DAY

The Doctor enters the room behind Susan.

SUSAN

We must face facts, Claire. I have spoken to the Doctor. It's time to turn off the life support.

CLAIRE

(Panicking)

But he has more doors.

SUSAN

Shut up! If he can't live without support, there's no point.

CLAIRE

But he's coming back, I know it.

SUSAN

The decision's been made.
(beckons the Doctor)
Doctor, will you.

EXT. EDWARD'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Edward paces, taking it all in.

EDWARD

Sweetie, keep fighting.

CLAIRE (V.O.)

Stop! Don't turn it off.

EDWARD

That's my girl.

INT. CITY HOSPITAL - EDWARD'S ROOM - DAY

The Doctor turns back for final instructions.

CLAIRE

NO! He's my Daddy.

SUSAN

I've decided. Doctor proceed.

CLAIRE

Wait! Aren't I next of kin as well?

EXT. EDWARD'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Edward's face melts, tears stream.

EDWARD

Yes you are, yes you are.

INT. CITY HOSPITAL - EDWARD'S ROOM - DAY

The Doctor stops.

DOCTOR

Well, perhaps. I'm not sure.

SUSAN

Look, I'm the adult, I make the
decisions. Do it.

The Doctor throws a compassionate smile at Claire.

DOCTOR
I'm sorry Mrs Birch, I will need to
ask legals for guidance.

He leaves the room followed by a furious Susan.

Claire dashes over and takes hold of Edward's hand.

EXT. EDWARD'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Edward stands still, as though waiting instructions.

CLAIRE (V.O.)
Daddy, you have to be quick.

Edward nods agreement and scans the scene.

Parked up, away from the house, is the younger Edward in his sedan. By the house are two other cars.

Edward walks up to the car where his younger version stares at the house - his face totally pale.

On the passenger seat a small bunch of roses.

EDWARD
I didn't know how to break the
news. I couldn't speak. In the end
I never did.

Edward sighs, turns toward the distant house. On the driveway behind him rests a new doorway filled with blue mist.

Edward's hands shake. He steps back considers everything - the house, the car, the fields of corn.

EDWARD
I don't get it. Why do this to me?

INT. CITY HOSPITAL - EDWARD'S ROOM - DAY

Something jogs her memory and Claire grabs her drawing pad. On the first page are the five doors.

CLAIRE
There are five doors, Daddy.

She turns the page to reveal the picture of the figure, seen at the beginning - it's Edward. Except, on his waving arm, the hand is largely missing. She frowns.

EXT. EDWARD'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Edward takes a deep breath, heads into the door, emerging--

INT. EDWARD'S HOUSE - BEDROOM DOORWAY - DAY

--on the first floor landing.

The bedroom door rests ajar. His younger self, roses in hand, gazes through the gap to see Susan having sex.

Edward turns away - too painful a memory.

EDWARD

That day...broke me.

Ahead a new doorway emerges, with purple mist.

Pleased to get away, he strides into the door back to the--

DRIVEWAY

--where his younger self - frozen on screen - heads toward the cornfield, taking his tie off as he walks.

EDWARD

I couldn't face it. Nobody would listen, anyway. So I...walked.

In the garden is a child's swing. The roses rest on the seat.

Edward walks up to them, kneels in front.

EDWARD

I'm sorry sweetie. I've always wanted to explain but...

Edward shakes his head, seems beaten.

INT. CITY HOSPITAL - EDWARD'S ROOM - DAY

Claire sketches the child's swing. Her head snaps up - a thought. She dashes from the room.

LATER

The Doctor and Susan enter the room - they stop dead.

Claire rests her head on Edward. Around him are scattered rose petals.

DOCTOR

Claire, it's been confirmed. The decision to switch off the machine rests with your Mother.

CLAIRE

But he's only got one more do.

SUSAN

I told you, makes no sense.

EXT. EDWARD'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Edward holds his head in his hands.

SUSAN (V.O.)
Doctor, turn off the machine.

He stares up at the sky now a bright yellow.

EDWARD
Don't worry sweetie. I'll always be
somewhere. I won't leave this time.

DOCTOR (V.O.)
Understood, Mrs Birch. Turning off.

Edward grimaces, expecting some dire fate.

INT. CITY HOSPITAL - EDWARD'S ROOM - DAY

Claire steps back against the wall terrified.

CLAIRE
But I see it now, his hand.

Quickly she picks up her drawing pad and starts to fill in
the hand of the waving figure.

The Doctor flicks the switch. The BEEPING...stops.

EXT. EDWARD'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Resigned to his fate, Edward stares at the sky.

His legs give way and he drops to the ground. He tries to
stand, but can't - his body is failing.

DOCTOR (V.O.)
I'm sorry, he's beginning to fade.

Edward bows his head in defeat.

A yellow puff of smoke causes him to look up. In front,
another door has appeared with a yellow mist.

EDWARD
Five doors...

CLAIRE (V.O.)
Don't give up, Daddy. I've just
seen you here, I have.

EDWARD
You have!

Edward dives forward. Like a crazed man, he desperately crawls through the dirt, dragging his dead legs behind him.

Closer, closer...until in a final act, he hurls himself through the closing door and...falls...falls--

--into a swirl of yellow fog.

Slowly his eyes begin to adjust to see the outline of the--

HOSPITAL ROOM

--and Claire, who quickly draws.

She looks up to see a yellow, ghost like Edward sit up from the bed, his real body still lying flat.

He smiles at Claire - pure joy.

Edward raises his right hand, palm open toward Claire like he is going to wave.

Slowly, he folds down the two middle fingers, leaving his thumb and two outer fingers pointing upwards.

Stunned, Claire lifts up her finished picture - it matches.

DOCTOR
(looking at picture)
That's sign language.

CLAIRE
For?

DOCTOR
I love you.

Claire copies the hand signal to Edward.

CLAIRE
I hear you, Daddy. I hear you.

Beaming with pride, Edward fades away.

FADE OUT.