

Aiden

by

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FADE IN:

DEEP SPACE.

In the distance, A PLANET, bright red, quaint. Then --

A SPACE CRAFT, massive in size, drifts into the frame. THE GARRISON.

EXT. FIELD- DAY

A WIDE OPEN FIELD, lush green grass sways in a light breeze. We spot A BOY, lying face-up, gazing at the clouds in a beautiful blue sky.

He is AIDEN (17), jet black hair to match his attire. A dull, lifeless expression.

He stretches his hand towards the sky, holds it, in a daze. Then suddenly --

WOMAN(O.S)

Lord Aiden.

The world around him becomes distorted, reshaping, as this once tranquil setting DISSOLVES into --

INT. ROOM- GARRISON

-- an empty, colorless room.

Aiden sits up, finds A WOMAN kneeling to him, her head bowed.

WOMAN

Apologies for the intrusion. Sir Taro wishes to know of your condition.

Aiden PLOPS back down, hard floor instead of grass. He stretches his hand back out, the clouds replaced with dim ceiling lights.

AIDEN

Restless. Nowhere I travel to helps. ... Such a strange feeling.

WOMAN

A feeling, my lord?

Aiden PAUSES, searching for the words to express himself, but unable to find them. He gives up.

AIDEN

Is there something Taro needs of me?

WOMAN

We've arrived at the planet Dublin. He request your presence on the Deck.

INT. MAIN DECK- GARRISON

The ships MAIN DECK consist of two levels, separated by a short flight of steps.

ON THE BOTTOM LEVEL, a collection of FUTURISTIC COMPUTERS, monitored by a dozen or so men and women. Flashing lights and blinking screens cast no doubts that this is the life of the ship.

An enormous CIRCULAR WINDOW at the head of it all let's us see out into space, the red planet not too far ahead.

ON THE TOP LEVEL, a few privileged individuals supervise the functions below. Amongst them is --

TARO(42), hands neatly cuffed behind his back, nose turned up to anyone he feels is beneath him, wearing the deceitful smile of a corrupt man.

THEN,

A MAN enters, briefly whispers into Taro's ear. Now Taro steps forward, speaking so everyone on both levels can hear --

TARO
Lord Aiden is on Deck.

They all suddenly STOP what they're doing, stand. Taro steps aside and in comes --

AIDEN.

SHIP'S CREW
Greetings, Lord Aiden.

Taro is the first, and only, to approach him.

TARO
My lord. We were all quite worried.
But I trust your condition has
improved...

Aiden ignores him, his attention shifting to the red planet.

AIDEN
... Is that it?

TARO
Indeed it is.

Aiden begins the journey down the steps to the bottom level. Taro follows.

The men and women he passes on the way are silent, motionless, heads down in respect of their master.

Now Aiden steps onto a small platform, putting him directly in front of the window, a front row seat to the red planet. And for a moment, he gazes it at, his expression unreadable. Then --

AIDEN

Is there no other way?

TARO

My lord, the leaders of Dublin are a brazen bunch. For centuries they've plotted against the Royal Family. It's time you make an example of them.

Aiden debates in his head.

TARO

Their armies are growing. Soon they'll challenge you for control of your empire. ... Your father would be furious if it came to that.

AIDEN

But surely there are those on Dublin who oppose the government. Why should they share the same fate as their leaders?

Taro steps in close, his words beginning to slither into Aiden's ear --

TARO(CONT)

I understand your concerns, my lord. However, other planets in the empire are beginning to question your competence. Foolishly interpreting your mercy as weakness. How soon before they follow Dublin's lead? As your loyal advisor, I must insist that you put an end to this arrogance once and for all.

Aiden pauses, lets out a heavy SIGH. Then,

He slowly stretches his hand out towards the planet. Taro steps back. A BEAT --

The ship begins to TREMOR. The crew brace themselves, physically and mentally.

Now we watch as the red planet begins to CRUMBLE, massive chunks breaking apart before the entire structure SHATTERS. Literally, destruction on a GLOBAL SCALE. When the debris clears, what was once a planet is no more.

TARO, a wickedly satisfied expression.

Aiden lingers at the window. In the reflection, we see his expression, full of painful regret.

INT. CORRIDORS- GARRISON

Taro walks with Aiden through the corridor.

They suddenly come upon THREE YOUNG WOMEN, in tattered clothing, on their hands and knees scrubbing the floors with cleaning brushes.

When they see Aiden approaching, they SCURRY to the edges, clearing a path. As Aiden walks by --

His eyes meet with one of the girls, ELEN(16), gorgeous, her big brown pupils instantly cast a spell on him.

He STOPS, dead in his tracks. Taro turns --

TARO

My lord...?

Aiden stares at Elen, and as uncomfortable as it is for her, she stares back.

TARO(CONT)

(to Elen)

How dare you insult the young lord, servant! Bow your head.

And she quickly does.

TARO(CONT)

(to Aiden)

Please. We've business to attend to
--

Aiden tunes him out, kneeling to eye-level with Elen. Taro is baffled.

AIDEN

(gentle)

Look at me.

Reluctant, she does. And Aiden is back to gazing into her eyes, as if they were the very essence of beauty.

AIDEN

What's your name?

ELEN

... Elen.

Her voice is soft, her name melts onto Aiden's body.

AIDEN

Elen. Would you mind it at all
if...if I asked you to accompany me
to my quarters.

TARO
(shocked)
Young master...

Elen can't believe her ears.

ELEN
No--not at all, but...have I done
something wrong?

AIDEN
(shakes his head)
Of course not.

He stands, extending his hand to her --

AIDEN(CONT)
Please. Come.

She hesitates, looking to Taro whom isn't the least bit happy about it. But Aiden's hand remains extended, refusing to take no for an answer.

Elen takes hold of it, rising to her feet.

AIDEN(CONT)
Taro, I'll be retiring to my
quarters for now. I trust you'll
take care of things until I emerge.

TARO
Of course, my lord, but--

And they're off, leaving behind a very confused Taro.

INT. AIDEN'S QUARTERS- GARRISON

Aiden and Elen enter, and she's immediately blown away.

Aiden's room is BREATHTAKING. An indoor waterfall occupies the entire wall to one side. To the other, the biggest BED we've ever seen, dressed in elegant sheets.

The rest of the room is a collection of pricey objects of pleasure: chess set, gaming station, ect.

Elen wanders around, fascinated --

ELEN
This is...amazing. I've never seen
so many expensive things.

But when she remembers where she is, she QUICKLY turns to Aiden, kneels, bowing her head --

ELEN(CONT)
Forgive me, my lord. I'm out of
line.

Aiden ushers her to her feet.

AIDEN

Can I tell you a secret about myself, Elen? I hate it when people call me "lord". Call me Aiden. Please.

ELEN

... A-Aiden.

He smiles, then observes her clothing, the biggest contrast to the things in his room.

AIDEN

What's your favorite color?

ELEN

My favorite color? I've never really thought about it. ... Perhaps yellow?

He holds out his hand.

AIDEN

Yellow it is. Take my hand.

She stares, reluctant. But the second she does takes hold of it --

She's instantly in a BEAUTIFUL SUN-DRESS, white with yellow polka dots. She stares in awe of her new clothing.

ELEN

This is...

Aiden pulls her over to a body-sized MIRROR, revealing her reflection, the dress compliments her well.

AIDEN

Stunning. Yellow truly suits you.

Too humble to compliment herself, she just smiles. Their eyes meet for a split second, she quickly looks away, shy, nervous. It doesn't bother Aiden.

AIDEN

Can I show you something?

She nods. Now Aiden steps into the Mirror, swallowed up as if it were a pool of water, vanishing.

ELEN, wide-eyed.

AIDEN(O.S)

Come.

Very reluctant, she follows.

INT. ROOM- GARRISON

The same empty room from before. Aiden steps into the center. Elen hangs back, confused.

ELEN
... What is this?

AIDEN
My quiet place, so to speak. I come here when I need...peace of mind.

ELEN
I don't understand.

Aiden steps close to her, taking both of her hands.

AIDEN
Elen, how would like to ride on a ferris wheel?

ELEN
A what?

Aiden closes his eyes, takes a deep breath. Then suddenly, The walls begin to dissolve, reshaping, reforming, until the two find themselves --

EXT. FERRIS WHEEL- NIGHT

-- Sitting side by side in a FERRIS WHEEL CAR, mid-way from the top and rising, overlooking a beautiful landscape.

ELEN, stunned, gazing over the edge, wind rushing through her hair.

ELEN
Oh my...

AIDEN
Beautiful, isn't it? I once visited a planet called Earth and experienced all sorts of things. Like this ride. And cotton candy.

ELEN
Candy...made of cotton?

Aiden holds out his hand, a small PAPER CONE suddenly appears from nowhere. Now he TWIRLS his finger around the opening, weaving a mass of PINK COTTON CANDY from thin air, like magic.

He offers it to Elen, she tries it, a smile instantly spreads across her face.

ELEN
It's delicious!

She eats more, delighted. Aiden fixates on her.

AIDEN

Elen...I've come here at least a hundred times. Stared off into the night sky for hours. But it's never brought me as much joy as this very moment. ... I think it's because of you.

Elen stops eating, turning to him.

ELEN

But...I'm just a servant. You're a god.

AIDEN

Being a god, having such power, it's never brought me happiness. Not without someone to share it with.

He leans in, grabbing her hands, holding them for ransom.

AIDEN

I know we just met, but stay with me Elen. I'll give you anything, the universe if you asked for it. Please, bring me the joy of companionship that I've longed for.

Elen PAUSES, then gently pulls her hands free, turning away from him.

ELEN

I...can't. I have a home. A family. I was taken from them three years ago and I've been trying to return ever since. I know they're worried...

Aiden gets a smug smile --

AIDEN

Well if that's all that concerns you then fine. Your family will join us here on the Garrison, and live like kings and queens as long as you're by my side. Will that satisfy you?

She turns to him, a glimmer of joy coming to her eyes.

ELEN

My lord--I mean Aiden, ... do you mean it?

Aiden nods, just as they reach the peak of the Ferris Wheel. The view is exhilarating. Elen HOPS to her feet, both hands

up and out, overjoyed.

ELEN

I can't believe it. I'm finally going to see my family. It's been so long.

Aiden's happiness mirrors hers.

AIDEN

Tell me, what planet do they live on. I'll have Taro set a course immediately.

ELEN

No need. I heard rumors around the ship. We're already on the way. It should only be a matter of time.

AIDEN, confusion slowly creeping upon him.

AIDEN

... What planet?

ELEN

It's called Dublin.

We see Aiden's heart SINK, pain and regret HURTLING back to him as he sees --

FLASH

HIM, stretching his hand out towards the red planet Dublin through the circular window.

ELEN(V.O)

Wait till you see it. My home planet is beautiful.

FLASH

The planet crumbling, being destroyed. Only this time, Aiden hears something he hadn't heard the first time around --

The horrified SCREAMS of it's inhabitants. Men. Women. Children. Haunting him, as he stares at himself through the reflection of the glass.

ELEN(V.O)

And the people. They're kind and caring. Especially my family.

END OF FLASHES

Elen sits back down in the car, turns to Aiden, whom is still battling his memories.

ELEN

You've made me happier than I've ever been, Aiden. I promise, I'll stay with you always.

Her words awaken him. He turns to her, a heavy heart, she notices.

ELEN

...What's wrong?

AIDEN

Elen...close your eyes.

ELEN

Why?

AIDEN

Please, just trust me.

Reluctant, she closes them. He leans in, bringing his lips within centimeters of hers, we expect a kiss. But he PAUSES, bites his own lip in frustration before pulling away.

He gently taps Elen on the forehead and she suddenly PASSES OUT.

He catches her limp body just as the world once again DISSOLVES to bring them --

INT. ROOM- GARRISON

-- back to the emptiness of the Garrison.

A LONG BEAT. He stares at an unconscious Elen, deep rooted pain in his eyes. But then, his expression slowly fades into the dull, lifeless expression from before.

AIDEN

(soft)

I'm sorry, Elen. Nothing I can give you will ever atone for what I've done. But I'll make it right. When you wake up, you won't remember you ever had a family. A home. ... And you won't remember me.

FADE OUT:

THE END