

MY FATHER'S DAUGHTER

BY

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FADE IN:

EXT. IRISH COAST 1992 - DAY

Clear blue sky. Beach deserted save for a family of four.

MOTHER and five year old SON build sand castles. FATHER and eight year old DAUGHTER play ball.

CLOSE ON the girl. Football kit, hair in pony tail. She kicks a ball to her father.

GIRL  
How many's that?

FATHER  
Seven.

Father assumes kicking position. Girl composes.

Ball flies high into the air. Girl maps flight path. Ball drops. Girl gathers it to her chest with ease. Kicks it to her father.

Father kicks the ball skyward's, hard as he can. Girl same ritual as before. Ball drops.

Father falls to ground, clutches foot in pain. Girl makes to help, stops, resumes position, gathers the falling ball safely into he arms.

Father jumps up.

FATHER (CONT'D)  
Good. Very good.

Girl venomously kicks the ball to her father, who catches it skillfully with one hand.

He kicks the ball high into the air. Step right, step left, girl opens her arms.

Loud ROAR from behind. Girl fumbles, ball drops to the ground.

Wide grin on fathers face. Girl gutted, turns, walks, picks up the ball.

FATHER (CONT'D)  
Getting late. Will we call it a day?

Girl agitated shakes her head.

GIRL  
Ten in a row, that's what we said.

Father smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. TAXI - PRESENT DAY

JESSIE MOORE thirties, impeccably dressed, stares out the window. Wipes a tear, fixes her face.

Sitting beside Jessie is JAMES early forties. Beside James is FRANKIE, eight years old. Hair in a pony tail, dressed in a football kit.

INT. HOSPICE ROOM - DAY

Sparse, dim lit. Machines HUM in the background. Asleep in bed FRANK MOORE, sixties. On the way to meet his maker.

Jessie enters, quietly sits. Stares at her father two beats.

Squirms, twists, turns.

LATER

Frank slowly opens his eyes, focusing on his daughter.

FRANK

Did I die and go to hell.

JESSIE

Hoping hell's going to be a lot worse for you.

Jessie parts her hair.

FRANK

I'd say you want to make sure they seal the lid good and tight?

JESSIE

In one.

Parts her hair.

FRANK

Not trust your brother?

Jessie smiles, shakes her head.

JESSIE

Sean always went too easy on you.

Frank coughs repeatedly.

Jessie leans, picks up and hands the old man a sports bottle containing clear liquid.

Coughing subsides. Frank takes a drink, grimaces, takes another gulp.

FRANK  
Don't taste the same.

JESSIE  
Probably because its water.

Frank hands the bottle to Jessie who places it on the bedside locker.

FRANK  
No, vodka. It's the ice that's missing.

Jessie rolls her eyes. Old man sits up, Jessie moves to help, stops.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
Been a while. You must be what, mid thirties?

JESSIE  
Thirty six.

Frank looks Jessie up and down.

FRANK  
Very like your Ma.

JESSIE  
I wish, she was beautiful. Never understood how she picked you.

FRANK  
Never will either.

Frank beckons for his drink. Jessie reluctant, obliges.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
Asked her once. Took me til I was fifty mind.

Jessie interested, sits up.

JESSIE  
What she say?

Frank contemplates. Shakes his head.

FRANK  
Husband and wife stuff, none of your business.

Jessie raging.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
Missed you, your brother.

JESSIE  
Missed him too.

FRANK  
He's going to be angry.

Jessie nods.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
Only because in all the years since  
your Ma passed, you never got in  
touch.

Frank swigs from his bottle.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
Make it right. Sean's one of the  
few men I look up to.

Jessie stares Frank head to foot.

JESSIE  
Would have said you look up to most  
men. But I take your point.

Awkward silence.

JESSIE (CONT'D)  
He always saw the good in you.

FRANK  
Sees the good in everyone. Saying  
that, he'd have slit my throat if  
your Ma asked.

Jessie laughs.

JESSIE  
True. And that's exactly what you'd  
expect of him.

Frank nods.

JESSIE (CONT'D)  
Got away with more than me. Because  
he was a boy I suppose.

Frank offended, shakes his head.

FRANK  
Because he was a man.

Frank sits up, Jessie fixes his pillows.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
Remember our first holiday in the  
Algarve?

Jessie nods.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
One day me and him went for  
a stroll in Albufera.

JESSIE  
Scorching that year.

FRANK  
So hot I had to sit under a tree to  
get away from the sun.

Jessie leans forward, takes the bottle from her fathers  
grasp.

Frank incredulous.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
While we were sitting there, an old  
lady carrying a big bag of shopping  
stopped and sat down. She put her  
walking stick down, but it fell to  
the ground.

Jessie takes a drink, coughs, splutters, passes it to Frank.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
Place was packed that day. But in  
all the mayhem, Sean saw the stick  
fall. He immediately went over and  
picked it up.

Jessie swallows hard.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
Old woman looked over at me and  
smiled. Didn't need say a word. I  
knew there and then your thirteen  
year old brother was a man.

Frank takes a swig.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
All down to your Ma. I never got a  
look in.

JESSIE  
Just as well. Look how the first  
experiment turned out.

KNOCK on the door.

Jessie stands, chokes back emotions.

JESSIE (CONT'D)  
Some people I want you to meet.

She walks, opens the door. James and Frankie enter.

Frank and James shake hands.

FRANK  
Must have done some bad shit in  
your last life son.

James laughs. Frankie appears from behind James, stands  
bedside.

Frank puts out his hand.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
I'm Frank. And you are?

Frankie firmly places her hand in the old mans palm.

FRANKIE  
Frankie. Frankie Moore.

They shake. Frankie sits on her grandfathers bed.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)  
Mammy says horrible things about  
you all the time.

Frank looks at Jessie. She parts her hair, looks away.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)  
Doesn't mean it though.

JESSIE  
I do.

Jessie parts her hair.

Frankie leans in close to the old man.

FRANKIE  
Not true. I can tell.

James smiles, Jessie shakes her head, parts hair.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)  
When I'm bold, she says horrible  
things about me too.

Frank feigns shock.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

Then she plays with her hair. When  
mammy tells fibs, she plays with  
her hair.

Jessie raises hand to head automatically, starts to part her  
hair. Penny drops. She quickly puts her hand down by her  
side.

Frank laughs. Beckons Frankie close, whispers in her ear.

FRANK

Great to meet you Frankie Moore.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

Mourners gather.

SEAN, late thirties, stands beside his sister, brother in law  
and niece.

OVER THE PARTING GLASS

Faces of the funeral attendees. Best friend, biker, lady  
footballer, rich man, poor man. All shapes and sizes.

Back to the family and upwards to clear blue sky.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Waves make to shore. A ball on the sand.

JAMES picks it up, kicks it long to Frankie, who gathers with  
ease.

Frankie passes to her mother. She catches skillfully.

Jessie kicks the ball hard and straight to James. He fumbles.

FADE OUT.