

A LOST DIAMOND

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INT. CORRIDOR - ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY

BRIAN (50s), kind features on his prematurely aged face, walks along a tall stern woman, Mrs. BERGMAN(60S). They speak in hushed voices as they approach the classroom.

BRIAN

Gabe's not a special care kid. He's overly smart but not autistic.

MRS. BERGMAN

A few more sessions, Brian. Please.

Brian has nothing else to do but nod. He enters the classroom while Mrs. Bergman strides away.

INT. CLASSROOM - SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

The classroom is dark and seemingly empty.

Brian switches on the light to see GABE (12), sitting on the floor in a corner. Gabe's eyes twitch at the light.

Gabe holds a piggy bank. He brings it to his ear and shakes. There's no sound.

Brian takes a chair, sits next to Gabe. Gabe looks at him.

GABE

You don't like working with me, do you?

BRIAN

That's not true.

Gabe reaches into his pocket and retrieves five one hundred dollar bills. He drops them one by one into the piggy bank.

BRIAN

Who gave you that kind of money?

A long moment passes. Gabe shakes the piggy bank to hear the money rustle inside.

GABE

I don't know what to do with it. What would you do?

Something changes in Brian's face.

BRIAN

I'd use it for a good cause.

Gabe looks for the lid on his piggy bank. Brian leans toward it, flips it around and reaches inside of a small opening.

BRIAN

It's deeper in. My girl used to have one just like it.

GABE

Your daughter? Where is she now?

Brian's face contorts.

INT. HOSPITAL - FLASHBACK

Brian stands behind a Plexiglas window of an ICU unit. Inside the room is a bald twenty year-old GIRL, tied to an IV with a tube protruding from her mouth.

A DOCTOR (50s) approaches. Together they watch her lose to the disease with every passing second.

DOCTOR

I'm very sorry, Brian.

Brian nods his appreciation.

DOCTOR

We don't know how to thank you for your contribution. I understand you could try saving her instead.

Brian tears up - he knows.

BRIAN

Just make sure it's anonymous.

BACK TO SCENE

Gabe's eyes connect with Brian's.

GABE

I'm sorry, too, Brian.

BRIAN

Why? I didn't say anything. Listen, I like you, that's why I won't waste your time. Being mature isn't autism.

He puts a hand on Gabe's shoulder.

BRIAN

You need to be around your peers. Ask Mrs. Bergman about that.

GABE  
I'll think about it, Brian.

EXP. PARKING LOT - DAY

A slick SUV. Black with tinted windows.

INSIDE

At the back seat are Gabe with Mrs. Bergman. It's just them and a Driver in front.

GABE  
What happened to his daughter?

MRS. BERGMAN  
Died from leukemia. He didn't spend a dime from that diamond on her.

GABE  
Maybe he didn't take it after all.  
I'll get the answers tomorrow.

Gabe exits the car.

MRS. BERGMAN  
He figured you're normal, Gabe. Try faking it at least.

GABE  
I'm not an actor. And most definitely not normal.

Mrs. Bergman cocks her eyebrow, claps the Driver's shoulder. The Drivers starts the engine.

INT. CLASSROOM - SCHOOL - DAY

Gabe focuses on his piggy bank much like before. Brian sits next to him. Gabe brings it to his ear and shakes to hear a subtle rustle of paper money inside.

GABE  
What do people do if faced a choice of giving it to those in need or using it for their own reasons?

Gabe shakes the piggy bank again. Now, pennies clink inside.

BRIAN  
I haven't seen you put any change in.

GABE  
It's a matter of belief, Brian.

Gabe fixates at Brian and sees:

INT. CABINET - HOUSE - FLASHBACK

Brian holds a piggy bank. He prods a lid, hidden deep on the other side and pulls it open. A diamond-like stone slips into his hand. Brian hides it in his pocket.

A YOUNG BOY'S VOICE  
Brian? You coming?

Brian quickly puts the piggy bank down.

BACK TO SCENE

Gabe breaks his stare.

GABE  
I know you were attached to your last student. David. Why did you stop your sessions with him?

Brian evaluates his every word before he starts talking.

BRIAN  
His dad decided I stole from them.

Brian waits for Gabe to respond, but Gabe is silent.

BRIAN  
Aren't you gonna ask me if I did?

GABE  
It's none of my business.

Gabe rises to leave. He doesn't take the piggy bank.

BRIAN  
Hey, don't forget your money.

GABE  
That piggy bank is empty.

Brian grabs the piggy bank, shakes it. He hears nothing.

BRIAN  
(jokingly)  
Did you use it for a good cause?

The question makes Gabe stop for a moment.

GABE  
Yes. I used it to understand you.

BRIAN

That's interesting. What am I?

Gabe walks toward the door of the classroom.

GABE

You're... you're alright.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Gabe sits next to Mrs. Bergman.

GABE

Brian didn't take that diamond. The autistic boy must have lost it. It was stupid of his father to let a child play with a gemstone anyway.

MRS. BERGMAN

Are you sure it's not Brian?

Gabe nods.

GABE

Yes. I saw his memories each time he cast his eyes at the piggy bank.

MRS. BERGMAN

Alright then.

Gabe turns to exit the car, when he remembers something.

GABE

Oh, and I need to be around my peers to start talking as one. And living as one. Which means...

Gabe salutes her and exits the car.

GABE

Adios, Mrs. Bergman. I won't do your dirty work anymore.

Mrs. Bergman watches him walk away.

MRS. BERGMAN

Such a poser. He will be back.

She claps on Driver's shoulder. The Driver starts the car.

FADE OUT