

Home Ward

Written By

Ben Bartholomew

Ben Bartholomew
Benmbartholomew@gmail.com

COLD OPEN:

A ceiling fan spins, strongly and proudly slicing the air around it. The lights shine a homely hue and saturate the room with a heavenly glow.

JUMP CUT:

CLOSE UP - CHILD'S EYES

The child's eyes are locked, fixed on the fan, the child doesn't blink or budge. Deep in thought and lost in his own imagination, he has all the time in the world to dream, wake up and go back to sleep over and over.

JUMP CUT:

STEADY MEDIUM SHOT - CEILING FAN

The fan moves slower, clearly worn from years of use, serving its purpose the wood is happily chipped. The lights are now dimmer, less heavenly, but still homely. It's bared witness to everything in this house and only moves deliberately.

JUMP CUT:

CLOSE UP - TEENAGER'S EYES

"15 YEARS LATER"

The teen stares, dead into the center of a blown bulb that hasn't been replaced yet. The eyes are more focused, the child inside is still in thought while the teenager is focused on one thing. The fans deliberate pace quickens the thought process and inspires him.

JUMP CUT:

STEADY MEDIUM SHOT - CEILING. (HANGS FOR 10-15 SECONDS)

JUMP CUT:

CLOSE UP - MANS EYES

The eyes widen, the ceiling fan has now disappeared. The once filled to the brim eyes of a child have grown cold.

"2 YEARS LATER"

The eyes blink frequently, unfiltered thoughts worm around and sneak into the surface of the mans mind. He blinks until

his eyes close.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. CHILDHOOD HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

FADE IN FROM BLACK:

CLOSE UP - MANS EYES

The closed eyes open, they don't pop, they stagnate to cold eyes, hiding memories that only saddle up in the late hours of the night.

LONG SHOT - THE LIVING ROOM COUCH

CASEY (20's) sits up and walls his face in his palms, slowly groaning and wiping his eyes.

TITLE CARD: HOME WARD

Looking around at the four walls and sighing heavily before flopping back onto the couch.

JUMP CUT:

EXT. SMALL TOWN MAIN STREET - DAY

MEDIUM TRACKING DOLLY SHOT - CASEY WALKING, FROM THE BACK

Hands in his pockets, ear buds in, the Man walks around the bustling part of his town. Quiet step after step, he parts the river school kids and elderly rushing to cement their bar stool flag like a rock, clearly standing out. The kids all have a familiarity with the town, b-lining to their destination with reckless abandon.

MEDIUM TRACKING DOLLY SHOT - MAN WALKING, FROM THE FRONT

Scanning the town with lazy, drooping eyes. He spots a restaurant, the eyes lighten and he walks more with a purpose. Finally finding the destination he needed.

JUMP CUT:

INT. HISTORIC GROUNDS - DAY

OVER THE MANS SHOULDER - HANGS FOR 15 SECONDS

The man takes a deep breath before moving to take his seat.

TRACKING DOLLY SHOT - MAN MOVING TO SEAT

The man walks past a few tables, of elderly couples and families. None of which are recognizable to him before settling at a table deeply ingrained in the middle of the restaurant. He gently removes his hoodie and places it on the back of his chair. Still in visible awe of the restaurant he sits. Slowly, the majesty of this place wares and he resorts to his phone.

TRACKING OVER THE SHOULDER - WAITRESS APPROACHING

Just as he commits to an app and starts perusing it, the waitress approaches him, however when she approaches she stops for a second. Slowly her jaw gapes.

WAITRESS
(Audible Gasp)
Casey?!

MEDIUM SHOT - CASEY ON HIS PHONE

Casey looks up at the waitress, the life back in his eyes from his phone browsing at seeing a familiar face.

CASEY
Jess?!

MEDIUM LONG SHOT - BOTH IN FRAME

JESS
Oh my- How lon- c'mere.

Jess motions Casey to get up and hug her, he does and starts to look really deeply at her and her features. Just as he does a white moth flies off of her outfit, he follows the moth as it flies away towards the door.

EXTREME LONG SHOT

Casey is alone in Historic Grounds, every seat is empty, the lights are dim, but he is certainly alone. Standing and staring at the camera.

MEDIUM SHOT - JESS TO CASEY

JESS
So, how long has it been? You didn't
tell me you'd be in town.

MEDIUM SHOT - CASEY TO JESS

CASEY

Oh well, I just kind of happened here.
Was busy on a trip and the
circumstances just led me here.

He breaks the awkward story with a charming smile as his face wrinkles a bit.

MEDIUM SHOT - JESS TO CASEY

JESS

So, uhh. Well, I guess I gotta take
your order but man is it good to see
you!

MEDIUM SHOT - CASEY TO JESS

CASEY

(Chuckling briefly)
I guess you do, but uhh when does your
shift?-

JESS

-About 10-20 minutes

CASEY

(Caught off-guard)
Oh uh. Well, we could go sightseeing.

JESS

(Ear to ear smile)
I'd love that. The sights aren't much
but I think you'll still recognize a
few.

CASEY

Great uhh, Pepsi please.

JESS

Huh?

CASEY

The drink-

JESS

-Oh! Duh. I'll get you started with-

CASEY

-No need. I know what I want
already...

Jess stares and Casey stays silent for a moment before realizing she's waiting.

CASEY
...Oh, the uhh Thanksgiving, well-
done.

JESS
Comin' right up.

She smiles, clicks her pen and walks away.

MEDIUM SHOT - CASEY SITTING

Casey smiles as he slowly ponders what he's initiated, he looks around at a few elderly people muttering about the exchange and dismissively scrunches his face before sitting back down and smiles to himself.

SLOW CROSS FADE:

EXT. SMALL TOWN MAIN STREET - DAY

LONG SHOT - HISTORIC GROUNDS ENTRANCE

The two exit, Casey holds the door for Jess as they start to walk around main street. They look around at a few old landmarks, like the Manor overlooking the whole town, or the small "park."

They look towards the manor

OVER THE SHOULDER - IN BETWEEN THE TWO (SHOT HANGS FOR 20 SECONDS)

SLOW CROSS FADE:

EXT. MANOR - EVENING

DOLLY SHOT

The two are walking closely and smiling before Jess runs off ahead.

JUMP:

CRANE SHOT - TOP TO BOTTOM

Two kids run up the road leading to the manor, crissing and crossing while putting their arms out like a plane. The girl skips around and running intermittently while the boy runs

and occasionally jumps to bridge gaps in their distance.

STATIC SHOT OF THE MANOR

Jess runs into frame and Casey slowly joins her as she stops and looks over the hill. They both walk into the foreground

LONG SHOT

Jess and Casey walk to the edge of the hill, looking in awe just observing, nothing thinking, speaking or moving. The picture speaks for itself, they can't add anything to the beauty. Casey slowly sneaks his hands into hers, she looks at it and turns back to the hilltop view and holds his hand back; the two look off.

MEDIUM SHOT

Casey and Jess have been sitting on a bench for a while and just talking, it's clear we've stumbled into their conversation.

JESS

So what's it like?

CASEY

It's a lot of work, but it's very rewarding to just be able to put yourself into something.

JESS

You sound like a dork.

The two share a quick chuckle

JESS

No, but seriously. Writing? You failed English

CASEY

(Chuckling)

I failed a lot of classes.

JESS

I know, like art. You skipped classes for like a week just because you were embarrassed.

CASEY

Yeah, but you also skipped Gym for a month.

JESS
(Rolling her eyes)
That teacher, uhhh Mr. Smitty?-

CASEY
-Yeah

JESS
He was all for me, it was weird!

Sharing another chuckle the two sit and look at the view before continuing.

JESS
So what kind of stories do you like writing the most?

CASEY
Fiction. I don't like dialogue, I- I can't write it; always comes out so-

JESS
-Oh come on! something more specific.

CASEY
I don't know I can't think of a genre.

JESS
Oh boo! Come one, think.

CASEY
Uhh, here let me ask you a question since you let me on your show.

The two laugh while Casey brings himself together to ask her a question.

CASEY
What is it about this place that ever changes?

JESS
Nothing. Just stays the same.

CASEY
I guess so.

JESS
Why? Not like you remembered it?

CASEY

No, it all feels so different.

JESS

Well of course it's different, time doesn't stop, it's taken a toll on this place. You think just because I still live here I can't see it?

CASEY

I guess I kinda did.

JESS

Well, hey I oughtta get back home. You going to be in town long?

CASEY

As long as my parents'll let me crash there.

JESS

Yeah, well we should do this again.

CASEY

Yeah

The two look at one another and hesitate to get up, so invested in the other each of them don't want to be the one to initiate the end of the conversation. Eventually Casey stands and starts to walk away.

MEDIUM TRACKING SHOT - CASEY WALKING

Casey walks, but when he walks past a tree a white moth begins to fly beside Casey, once he notices he stops and looks back

POV SHOT

The bench is empty, A white moth rests on the back before promptly fluttering away.

-Ben Strife