THE BENCH

by

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EXT. PARK - AFTERNOON

The sky is blue and many clouds are in air. It’s warm with very little wind blowing. Few birds are chirping and the sun is hiding behind a few clouds.

MICHAEL (20s) walks his small, black dog and as he reaches a bench under a tree, he sits down and lets his dog roam free.

    WOMAN (O.S.)
    Cute dog.

Michael is startled and looks beside him. There sits a tall, pretty and mysterious woman (20s). She is wearing a long, black coat.

    MICHAEL
    Thank you. He’s a good dog.

The woman takes her eyes off the dog and looks back at Michael.

    WOMAN
    There’s a better place than here.

Michael is confused.

    MICHAEL
    A better place? What do you mean?

    WOMAN
    A place that forgives you.

Michael raises his eyebrows.

    MICHAEL
    Will you please tell me what you are talking about?

The woman chuckles.

    WOMAN
    When someone makes a mistake, it’s rare anyone will truly forgive them. They may say they do but they really don’t.

    MICHAEL
    That’s life. Most people find it hard to forgive.

    WOMAN
    Yes, that’s true but some of us don’t deserve forgiveness.
MICHAEL
I don’t want to sound rude, but does any of this have a point?

The woman nods her head.

WOMAN
Yes. It does have a point. Life is made up of choices. Some good and some bad. Some make terrible ones and take the wrong path in dealing with them.

MICHAEL
Yes. A lot of us do but most of us make up for our mistakes.

WOMAN
When we’re born, we have the choice to live a full, normal life or live with only misery and mistakes we ignore.

MICHAEL
Yes. That’s generally what people do. I know that.

WOMAN
There are only a few of us, Michael, who believe we are here for a reason, while others believe it’s all just fun before death.

Michael squints his eyes in wonder.

MICHAEL
I don’t remember telling you my name.

WOMAN
You haven’t today.

Michael rubs his head.

MICHAEL
Then how do you know my name?

The woman chuckles.

WOMAN
I know everything about you, Michael.
MICHAEL
Would you care to tell me how?

WOMAN
You have your reason to live, as
did I. This is just where it all
led to.

MICHAEL
You’re kidding right? Did someone
put you up to this?

WOMAN
This is no joke, Michael. This is
truth. I do know you. I know you
well. Every detail. Every memory.
Every secret.

Michael stands up off the bench and steps a few steps away
from her.

MICHAEL
Who are you? I haven’t met you in
my life. There’s no way you know
anything.

WOMAN
That is where you are wrong,
Michael. I do know you. You are
Michael Joseph James. 27 years old.
You used to have anger issues and
now you are walking your dog in an
empty park.

MICHAEL
Either you tell me who you are and
how you know this or I am calling
the cops.

The woman smiles.

WOMAN
I’m your past.

MICHAEL
My past? What are you talking
about?

WOMAN
That accident really did a number
on you, hasn’t it, Michael?
MICHAEL
I don’t remember any accident.

WOMAN
That is why I am here. I am here to make you understand what happened.

The woman points to the bench beside her. Michael stares at her.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
Please sit down, Michael. It will be much easier if you do.

Michael slowly sits down on the bench.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
Have you ever noticed you come to the same park and sit at the same bench every time you walk your dog?

MICHAEL
It’s only a park.

WOMAN
Why?

MICHAEL
Why what?

WOMAN
Out of all the parks in this area, why do you always choose this one? Why do you choose this bench when there are several others?

MICHAEL
I just feel something familiar with it.

WOMAN
It’s called deja-vu, Michael. You feel you’ve been here before, yet, you can’t recall when. That’s why you keep coming back.

Michael lowers his eyes.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
This is where your past takes place.

(MORE)
At this same park, on this same bench, is where your forgotten memories happened.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARK - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Michael (18) and CHELSEA (17) walk into the park. They sit at the bench under the tree. Chelsea is uncomfortable and Michael is relaxed.

MICHAEL
How do you like this place?

Chelsea looks down, avoiding eye contact.

CHELSEA
It’s okay.

MICHAEL
I like to come here. It’s quiet.

CHELSEA
Yeah. It is.

Michael looks the other way, sighs and then looks back at Chelsea.

MICHAEL
I like you, Chelsea. You’re a very pretty girl.

Michael wraps his arm around Chelsea. Chelsea slides away from him and pushes his arm off her.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
I think it’s time we start going out. Be a couple. Me and you.

Michael feels up her leg.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
How about it?

Chelsea picks his hand up and pushes it away.

CHELSEA
I don’t like you that way, Michael.

MICHAEL
Everybody likes me.
Chelsea looks Michael in the eye.

    CHELSEA
    No. I’m sorry, Michael.

Michael is mad. He looks deep into Chelsea’s eyes.

    MICHAEL
    Come on, Chelsea. You know you want to. It’s me we’re talking about. Don’t deny that you want me.

    CHELSEA
    I said ‘no,’ Michael. How hard is that to understand?

Michael grunts and grabs her by the shoulders.

    MICHAEL
    No one ever says ‘no’ to me. Never.

    CHELSEA
    Yeah? Well, I just did.

Michael forcefully grabs her by the arms.

    MICHAEL
    Don’t you ever say that again! You hear me?

Chelsea rolls onto her back and knees him in the stomach. Michael moves his hands towards her throat as she screams. After moments of struggle, her body stops moving. Michael loosens his hands.

Michael’s eyes widen as they start to water.

    MICHAEL (CONT’D)
    No.

He looks at her eyes, still wide open. She lays there, dead.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PARK - AFTERNOON

Michaels eyes are wide in disbelief.

    WOMAN (O.S.)
    You buried the body under this bench.
MICHAEL

No.

Michael rubs his head.

WOMAN
You were panicking on your way home and were hit by a car a few blocks from this park. You were left in a coma which resulted in memory loss of events before the accident. The body was never found.

Michael is crying. He stands up and paces back and forth in front of the bench with his hand rubbing his forehead.

MICHAEL
No. I don’t believe you.

WOMAN
Believe me or not, it’s what you’ve done.

MICHAEL
There’s no way at all you’d know this. No. No way.

The woman stands up and walks over to Michael.

WOMAN
This should never happen to anyone else again.

Michael stands there as he gets closer.

MICHAEL
Who are you?

She stops in front of him and puts her mouth to his ear.

WOMAN
(whispering)
I’m your past.

Michael starts to move back but it’s too late as a gun shot is heard and Michael’s eyes go wide. He backs away from her and she looks into his eyes and grins.

WOMAN (CONT’D)
My bed will now be your bed. God may forgive you but I never will.
Michael falls to the ground.

FADE TO BLACK.

SUBTITLE:

"Revenge is an act of passion; vengeance of justice. Injuries are revenged; crimes are avenged." - Samuel Johnson

FADE OUT.