

Graying Memories

written by

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INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

THOMAS, 42, a seemingly well put together man in a blazer and MICHAEL, 48, a heavy set, tattooed guy are seen sitting in the waiting room of a doctor's office. Michael is holding the hand of JOANNE, 79, his mother. A DOCTOR, 40, walks out of a room holding a folder.

THOMAS

Finally! Do we know what's up with mom?

DOCTOR

Yes. Unfortunately it's not good news, and I suggest you brace yourselves.

JOANNE

Please don't beat around it, just say it.

DOCTOR

Ms. Byers, our diagnostics have confirmed that you have Alzheimer's disease. It's still in the early stages right now, but I'm afraid your condition is worsening and you're likely to start showing symptoms within about a year.

JOANNE

Oh god...No, I-- I can't-- that can't be right

MICHAEL

Jesus Christ

Joanne begins panicking. Michael pulls Joanne aside as Thomas talks to the doctor.

THOMAS

Is there anything that can be done to treat it?

MICHAEL

Mom? Mom look at me, it's gonna be okay.

DOCTOR

Unfortunately, there is no cure for it. I can prescribe her some Cholinesterase Inhibitors, but the most that would do is help make the process less painful for her.

THOMAS

Yes...Yes absolutely, if we can't cure it we need to help her however we can.

DOCTOR
 Okay, I can write you a prescription and you'll be able to pick it up by tonight.

JOANNE
 Michael, I-- I want to go home, can we go home please?

THOMAS
 Perfect, thank you so much!

MICHAEL
 Do you want to wait in the car?

Joanne nods, so Michael helps her stand up and they turn to Thomas and the Doctor.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
 We'll be in the car, meet us there when you're ready.

Thomas nods and turns back to the doctor as Michael escorts Joanne out of the office.

THOMAS
 Anything else we should know?

The doctor hands Thomas the folder. Thomas begins looking through it.

DOCTOR
 In this folder there are resources that can help you and your brother care for your mom. If you look in the back, there's the contact information of some nursing homes in the area. Other than that, just call me if you have any questions.

THOMAS
 Okay, thank you so much again.

DOCTOR
 Of course.

Thomas exits, looking through the folder on his way out. He takes out the pamphlet for a nursing home from the back of the folder. He looks at it and scoffs.

THOMAS
 (muttering)
 Absolutely not.

Thomas crumples the nursing home paper and throws it out.

INT. MICHAEL'S CAR - DAY

Text that says "3 YEARS LATER" is displayed on the screen. Michael is driving with Thomas in the passenger seat. Joanne is sitting in the back seat staring out the window.

JOANNE
Where are we going?

THOMAS
We're going home mom.

JOANNE
(looking out the window)
This isn't home. You're not taking me home, where are you taking me.

THOMAS
(mildly annoyed)
I already said we're going home!

JOANNE
Sir why are you yelling at me?

THOMAS
I'm not yelling!

MICHAEL
Dude just back off.

Thomas takes a breath.

JOANNE
Sir where are you taking me? Hello?
I'm talking to you!

Thomas remains silent.

JOANNE (CONT'D)
I don't have time for this. I'm going home.

Joanne opens the door to the moving car and goes to step out.

MICHAEL
SHIT!

Michael slams the breaks on the car and Thomas hits his head on the front of the car. The horn of the car behind them honks as Joanne steps out of the car and begins wandering. Michael turns to check on Thomas.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Oh shit, you alright?

THOMAS
OW! GOD, DAMN IT, FUCK!

EXT. MICHAEL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Thomas angrily gets out of the car and makes his way over to Joanne.

MICHAEL
Thomas come back, wait--

Thomas attempts to forcefully push Joanne back into the car.

THOMAS	JOANNE
Get in the car. Get-- Mom	Sir what are you doing? Sir--
stop yelling, mom GET IN THE	Stop it please-- STOP IT!
CAR!	HELP! HELP ME!

Pedestrians walking past the struggle look at Thomas in disgust. Thomas takes note of this and backs off, completely pissed off at the situation. Thomas mutters to himself as he walks back to the car.

THOMAS (CONT'D)
You want to be difficult? Find your
own fucking way home.

INT. MICHAEL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Michael has pulled the car over to the side of the road as Thomas enters the car.

MICHAEL
Dude, what the hell was that?

THOMAS
I'm not dealing with this. Can you
please get her back in the car?

MICHAEL
We'll talk later. Not okay man.

Thomas tries to calm himself down as Michael steps out of the car.

EXT. MICHAEL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Michael walks over to Joanne and approaches with a much more sensitive and cautious attitude.

MICHAEL
Are you alright?

JOANNE
...What's going on?

MICHAEL
We're taking you home.

JOANNE
My home is not here, I live on Long
Island.

Michael realizes she's talking about her childhood home, not where she lives now.

MICHAEL
...I know, we'll take you home, but
we need to stop somewhere first,
okay?

JOANNE
(gesturing to Thomas)
He's not going to yell at me again,
right?

MICHAEL
I'll make sure he doesn't, now come
on.

Michael takes Joanne's hand and leads her over to the car.

INT. JOANNE'S HOUSE - LATER

Michael is seen shutting Joanne's bedroom door, he lets out a loud sigh. Before he can get a second to rest, his phone rings. He looks at the phone to see ZOE is calling. He steps outside and answers it.

EXT. JOANNE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

MICHAEL
(tiredly)
Hey honey, everything okay?

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Michael's wife, ZOE, 49, stands in the kitchen on the phone.

ZOE
Yeah, I was curious if you still
planned on coming home tonight?

INTERCUT MICHAEL/ZOE

MICHAEL

Shit, I'm so sorry, I need to stay here with mom.

ZOE

Is Thomas not there with you?

MICHAEL

No he is, he's just being difficult, and I need to deal with him too.

ZOE

That's not fair. I haven't seen you in days, tell Thomas to man the fuck up and let you take a day off! Charlie really misses you, and I think you two could really use the father-son bonding time.

MICHAEL

I'll talk to him and see what I can do, but I won't promise anything. Please take care, and tell Charlie I say hi.

ZOE

Of course. Goodbye, I love you!

MICHAEL

Love you too, bye.

Michael sighs, enters the house and closes the door behind him.

INT. JOANNE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Joanne is laying in her bed, and the sound of a door shutting is heard. She gets up and begins looking around trying to figure out her surroundings.

After a bit of wandering around, the sound of Michael and Thomas arguing can be heard faintly in the background.

She steps through the door and wanders through the doorway while Thomas and Michael are seen arguing.

THOMAS

What's the point of apologizing? She's probably already forgot the whole thing by now! I'm sorry, I can't deal with this.

MICHAEL

So what, am I supposed to take care of her all by myself?

THOMAS

That would honestly be better, I have enough shit going on already, and I don't want to yell at her again.

As they argue, Joanne wanders out the back entrance unnoticed by Thomas and Michael.

MICHAEL

You selfish prick! You don't think I might be struggling with this too?

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I haven't seen my wife and son in days, and I'm getting really fucking tired.

THOMAS

No, I'm not-- I'm not saying that you're not struggling!

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Michael...I hear you--

MICHAEL

Oh, do you? Well, it's really fucking frustrating having to not only take care of mom, but also deal with your stupid temper tantrums! Grow the hell up! We agreed to do this together, and I feel like I'm the only one who grasps the gravity of the situation!

THOMAS

I... I can fully grasp the gravity of the situation. I'm sorry, but this is getting to be a little too much.

There is a brief silence as the both of them take a deep breath. Thomas makes his way over to a nearby drawer and pulls out the folder the doctor gave him.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Listen...neither of us are qualified enough to effectively help mom.

Thomas takes out a nursing home pamphlet and gives it to Michael.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

I've been thinking about it and--

MICHAEL

Absolutely not.

THOMAS

Why not?

MICHAEL

Jesus Christ, Thomas, what happened to you? Just a year ago you were talking about how shitty nursing homes are--

THOMAS

Well a year ago I didn't have a baby on the way! Fuck, with Charlotte's pregnancy and my boss getting on my ass about work, I'm sorry, I-- I can't do it!

The two of them stand in silence for a bit.

MICHAEL

Whatever. It's almost 7, we need to feed mom, we'll figure this out later.

The two of them walk into Joanne's empty room and are alarmed by her absence. They begin calling out for her, no response. They eventually find the back door wide open and realize she left God knows how long ago.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

(Muttering)

Shit.

Michael grabs his keys off of a table and the two of them make their way out the door.

INT. MICHAEL'S CAR - LATER

Michael and Thomas ride in silence for a bit, both of them looking out the window. After a little bit of looking, Thomas begins to softly cry.

THOMAS

(muttering)

I'm sorry.

MICHAEL

You good bro?

THOMAS

No...no I'm not. Mom might be gone
because of me!

MICHAEL

Woah, woah, why are you
saying it's because of you?

THOMAS (CONT'D)

We've been looking for hours,
we're not finding her!

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Because I was supposed to be
watching her and I was fighting
with you instead. Fuck...

MICHAEL

Don't say that, it's not over.
We'll find her.

The two ride in silence for a bit. Thomas begins to break
down.

THOMAS

I don't want her to go to a nursing
home, they treat their patients
like shit. I mean, I told you how
they treated Charlotte's dad!

MICHAEL

She's not going to a nursing home.

Michael pulls over and starts comforting Thomas.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Tell you what. If we...When we find
her, we'll set up a system. We'll
alternate taking care of her,
switch every 2 days or something.

THOMAS

I don't know. You're a lot better
at caring for mom than I am, I
might need help.

MICHAEL

That's okay! But also, you're gonna
be a father soon, you'll need
practice.

The two of them laugh and then hug each other. Once their
embrace ends, Thomas spots Joanne and points to her.

THOMAS

Holy shit.

MICHAEL

What-- Oh my God!

THOMAS (CONT'D)

That's her, that's her! Go go go!

The two of them rush out of the car and run over to Joanne offscreen.

EXT. JOANNE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Michael parks his car in front of Joanne's house and they all get out. Thomas is escorting Joanne to the front of the house. He turns around and puts out a hand, lightly gesturing for Michael not to come inside.

MICHAEL

What?

THOMAS

Go home. Take the week. I'm sure Charlie misses you a lot, I'll be fine.

MICHAEL

Wow...you sure?

Thomas nods.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Okay yeah, thank you so much, call me if you need any help!

THOMAS

Oh, don't worry, I'm sure I will.

The two of them laugh. They exchange goodbyes. Michael makes his way over to his car and drives off whilst Thomas escorts Joanne inside. The screen pans up.

FADE TO BLACK.